MONDAY
August 17, 2026

CHENNAI
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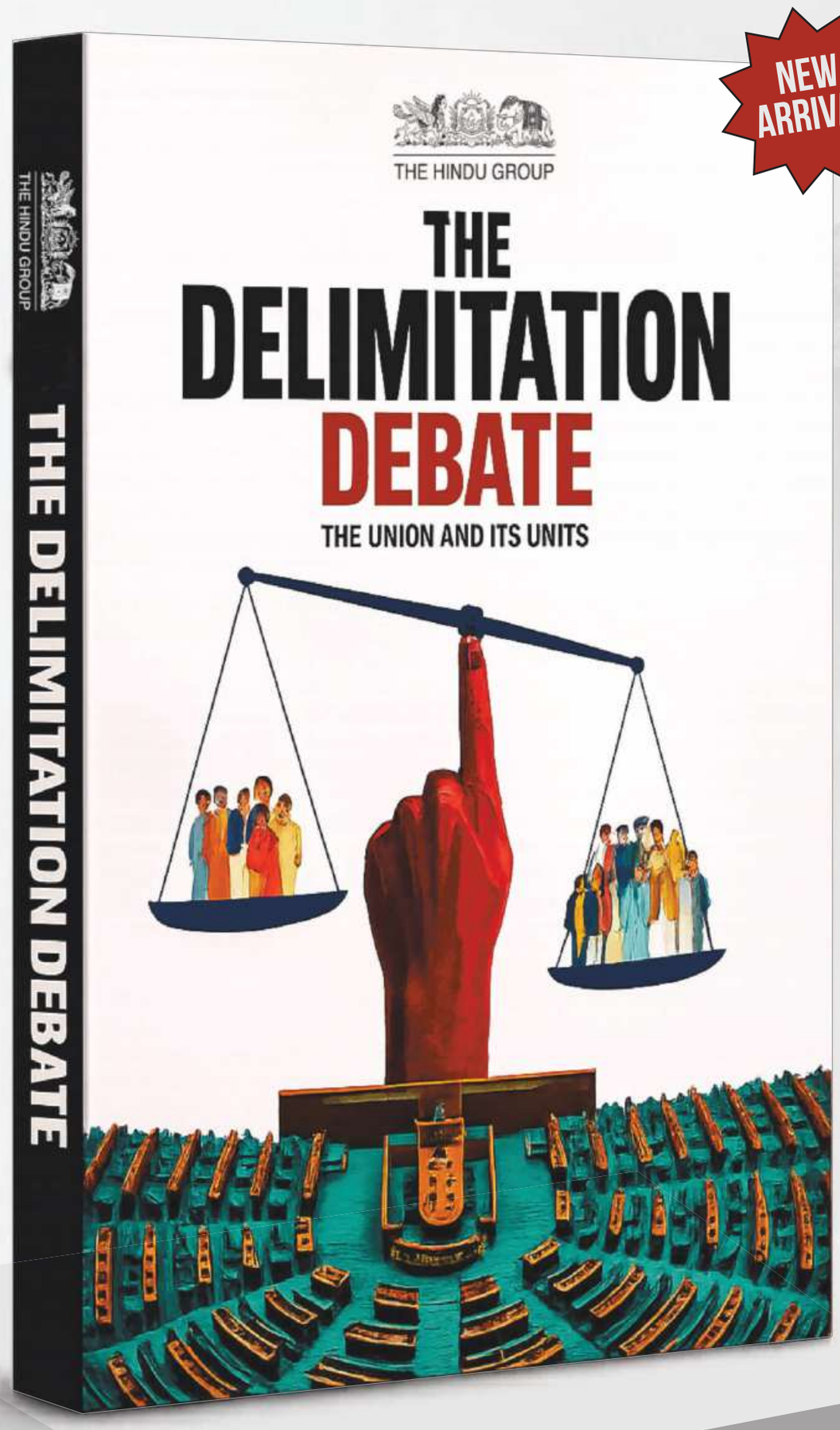

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Amit Shah demands apology from Cong.

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No private data sought for Census, says official

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Sri Lanka moves to expand judges' tenure

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RAPID CHANGES

India is losing West Asia, but it is not too late

New Delhi must act before its influence fades

EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

A DAY TO CHERISH

Bangladesh wins its first Test in Australia

SPORT » PAGE 15

NEARBY

Registration of exotic wildlife lags behind

CHENNAI
A large number of applications for registration of exotic animals is pending with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department, even as the State faces a shortage of facilities for housing exotic wildlife. » PAGE 6

Rejuvenation of ponds, channels in T.N. from today

CHENNAI
The Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department will begin the rejuvenation of 10,185 irrigation channels and 809 ponds across Tamil Nadu on Monday. » PAGE 6

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5, 17

Bangladesh sets 'conditions' for Rahman's visit to India

Dhaka seeks 'propitious environment' before any visit by the PM, says relations 'vitiated' by Hasina's press conference in Delhi; it calls for extradition of the deposed leader and other wanted persons

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Sunday that officials from New Delhi and Dhaka have been in talks for "several weeks" for a possible visit to India by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman. It also said that the atmosphere of bilateral relations has been "vitiated" by deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's August 5 press conference at the Foreign Correspondents Club here.

Urging India to "extradite" Ms. Hasina and the suspected killers of radical student leader Osman Hadi, the Bangladeshi Ministry's official spokesperson, A.K.M. Shahidul Karim, said that "a propitious environment" is required for Mr. Rahman's visit.

Indian envoy Dinesh Trivedi calls on PM Tarique Rahman in Dhaka on August 10 after the former PM's press conference in Delhi. PTI

The official spokesperson of India's External Affairs Ministry, Randhir Jaiswal, had reiterated last Friday that New Delhi had extended two invites to Mr. Rahman – one for the upcoming BRICS Summit to be held here and the other an invite for a bilateral visit. "We are of the view that a propitious environment needs to be created for the visit. To this end, we have requested the Indian authorities to expeditiously act on our request to extradite Sheikh Hasina and other fugitive criminals, and to hand over to Bangladesh the accused killers of Sharheed Sharif Osman Hadi in compliance with our bilateral extradition treaty," said Mr. Karim in a statement, adding, "We are awaiting their response."

Diplomatic sources had earlier indicated that bilateral talks had been on the right track after India distanced itself from Ms. Hasina's press conference in which she had targeted Mr. Rahman's government. Subsequently, Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka, Dinesh Trivedi, called on Mr. Rahman on August 10. In view of these exchanges, sources in Dhaka had indicated that "positive movements" had started and that the window for a big-ticket visit from Dhaka was gradually opening.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

NTA orders re-test for 3 UGC-NET papers over question errors

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The agency will hold re-exams for English and commerce on Sept. 9 and sociology on Sept. 10

The National Testing Agency (NTA) said on Sunday that it will re-conduct the University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET) for English, sociology, and commerce after finding that the papers had "defects", which "do not meet the standards of fairness and error-free examination".

The decision follows multiple complaints from candidates about errors in the question papers.

While the English and commerce re-exams will be held on September 9, the sociology re-test will be conducted on September 10, the NTA said. The agency had conducted the UGC-NET exam to recruit Assistant Professors and give Junior Research Fellowships, as well as for Ph.D. admissions, in 87 subjects in the last week of June. After the exams, candidates and student groups flagged large-scale question repetitions from past years in English and commerce, alongside spelling mistakes, poor translation, and garbled scholar names in the sociology paper. "NTA has decided to re-conduct exams for three subjects after many complaints were received regarding errors in the question papers. A committee made to review these complaints came to the conclusion that the exams needed to be re-conducted," Abhishek Singh, NTA Director-General, told *The Hindu*.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Jharkhand govt. invites protesters for talks today

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Protesting students burnt the effigies of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on the 23rd day of their stir at the Jaipal Singh Munda Stadium in Ranchi, alleging that the State government was not serious about their demand for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into alleged irregularities in competitive exams for government jobs.

The Congress is a part of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led government in the State.

Later in the day, the State government extended an invitation to the protest leaders for a fourth round of talks in Ranchi on Monday afternoon, according to a district official.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Ennore fisherfolk stage protest over mass fish deaths in river

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Ennore fisherfolk held a demonstration on Sunday after large quantities of dead fish were found floating in Kosasthalaiyar river near the Ennore estuary. Officials from the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) collected water and fish samples from the affected areas for analysis.

Thousands of fish and other forms of aquatic life, including *madavai, kizhangan, oodan, karuva and kelathi,* besides prawns and crabs, were found dead in the river. The fish were seen floating across large stretches of water. They were also found along the banks, and near mangroves.

Causing concern: Dead fish floating in the Kosasthalaiyar near the Ennore estuary on Sunday. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Describing the incident as an unprecedented disaster, the fisherfolk said that the deaths could be linked to the discharge of chemical waste into the river, and expressed concern over the impact on their livelihood.

Fisherfolk from eight villages blocked the Thazhankuppam Main Road. Following this, Tiruvallur MLA T. Arunkumar, the Tahsildar, TNPCB officials, and an Assistant Engineer from the Fisheries Department arrived to hold talks with the protesters.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 6

'Dimagi Naxal' doesn't mean Opposition, says Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A political row has erupted over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reference to "*dimagi* [intellectual] Naxals" in his Independence Day address, with Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju clarifying on Sunday that the remark was not aimed at Opposition leaders. Mr. Modi did not say Opposition leaders are "*dimagi* Naxals", Mr. Rijiju said, noting that the Prime Minister was calling out those who "support Maoists and reject the Indian Constitution".

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 11

Armed forces to provide CAPFs with list of retiring Agniveers eligible for recruitment

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The armed forces are likely to compile a list of Agniveers eligible for recruitment into the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) under the government's reservation policy for the temporary recruits, a government source has told *The Hindu*.

The first batch of around 25,000 Agniveers is scheduled to retire from the Army by December.

The source added that while the CAPFs, such as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), and Assam Rifles, have reserved 50% of constable vacancies for former Agniveers, the Army, Navy, and Air Force will furnish the details of eligible personnel, indicating that ex-Agniveers may not be able to apply directly for recruitment under the reserved quota.

With this move, retired Agniveers may not be able to directly apply for postings in the Central Armed Police Forces. FILE PHOTO

Although recruitment into the armed forces is not based on caste reservation, the official said that the existing quotas for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes will continue to apply for recruitment into the CAPFs.

The service tenure of personnel in the CAPFs extends up to the age of 60, whereas those in the armed forces retire much earlier. "During deliberations, it was felt that, if given a choice, many Agniveers would prefer to join the CAPFs rather than continue in the armed forces because of the longer career span and greater job security," the source said.

"Therefore, it has been decided, at least initially, that the armed forces, beginning with the Army, which will witness the first batch of Agniveers retiring later this year, will provide the CAPFs with a list of eligible candidates for recruitment under the reserved quota," the source added.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

সত্যমেব জয়তে
পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার

100 DAYS OF BHOROSHA

8 Pillars
For
Bikoshito
Poschimbongo

A
New Chapter Begins
in West Bengal

Shilpo | Swastho | Siksha | Sushashon
Shoshoktikoron | Seva | Suraksha | Samriddhi

ICA-D1263(17)/2026

100 DAYS | PORIBORTON AT A GLANCE

» 100 DAYS OF SHILPO

- **₹54,000+ crore** worth investment proposals
- **₹5,000 crore** Investment Promotion Framework
- **Single-window clearance** for investments **above ₹100 crore**
- **₹100 crore Startup Fund** to encourage new ventures and young entrepreneurs

» 100 DAYS OF SUSHASHON

- **Anti-Goonda Act** brought into force
- **Janatar Darbar** brings people's grievances directly to the Chief Minister
- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam** implemented across the State
- **Toll-free helpline** to report bribery, extortion, illegal toll booths and illicit liquor trade

» 100 DAYS OF SURAKSHA

- **1,000+ acres transferred** to the BSF to strengthen border security
- **Durga Suraksha Squads and Pink Patrols** patrolling streets to ensure women's safety
- **Cyber Help Desks in every police station** to combat cyber fraud
- **Women's Police Stations in every subdivision** and **Women's Help Centres in every police station**

» 100 DAYS OF SAMRIDDHI

- West Bengal's **first Atal Incubation Centre (AIC Techno) launched in Kolkata,** to nurture young entrepreneurs and startups
- **Transparent OBC reservation frame work ensures** the annulment of the unlawful **17% reservation** and ensuring a fair **7% reservation**
- **2 crore+ trees already planted** across the state under the Ekti Gaach Mayer Namey initiative
- **New airports** to come up in **Purulia, Balurghat** and **Malda,** with a **second greenfield airport** underway in **Kalyani**

» 100 DAYS OF SWASTHO

- **Free treatment up to ₹5 lakh** under the Mukhyamantri Swasthya Yojana
- **1.43 crore families** covered under Ayushman Bharat
- **2,000-bed state-of-the-art hospital coming up in New Town,** with **1,000 beds reserved for the underprivileged**
- **AIIMS and a state-of-the-art cancer hospital in North Bengal, along with modern state-run hospitals in the Sundarbans and Jangalmahal**

» 100 DAYS OF SHOSHOKTIKORON

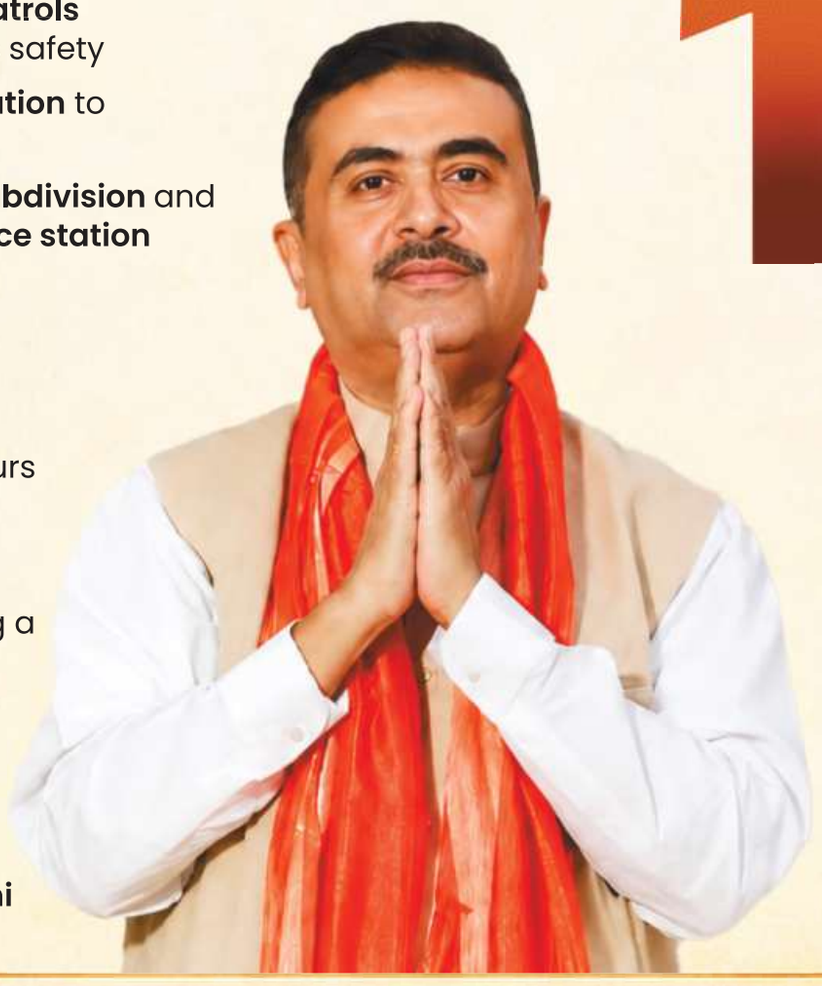
- **₹3,000 monthly** credited to the bank accounts of **1.19 crore Annapurna beneficiaries**
- **Free travel** for **women** on **government buses**
- To secure the future of the youth, work has already commenced for creating **1 lakh government jobs by the next year**
- **33% reservation for women** announced in government jobs

» 100 DAYS OF SIKSHA

- **Higher Mid-Day Meal allocation** and improved food quality in collaboration with ISKCON
- Nearly **35,000 books** from libraries across West Bengal made easily accessible online
- **₹296 crore financial assistance** to improve government and Bengali-medium schools
- **Sanitary napkin vending machines** installed in government schools; **10 lakh+ girl students** covered under **Kanyaratna**

» 100 DAYS OF SEVA

- **₹60,000** provided to **10.20 lakh beneficiaries** under Awas Yojana
- **Fish and rice** now served at Maa Ahar canteens
- **₹500 increase in monthly pensions** for senior citizens, widows and persons with disabilities
- Daily food allocation for patients in government hospitals **increased from ₹56 to ₹110**



100 DAYS OF BHOROSHA

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NEW WEST BENGAL

ICA-D1263(17)/2026

T. Ramasami, former secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India felicitating a student at VIT, Chennai, convocation on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

'Youth play crucial role in shaping humanity'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The youth have an important role in building not only their own future, but also shaping their family, the country and humanity, said T. Ramasami, former secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India at the 14th annual convocation of Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), Chennai on Sunday.

"Since 2000, Tamil Nadu has emerged as a leader in research and development, as measured by the number of research papers published in peer-reviewed journals. About 61 per cent of the research papers published in India are from Tamil Nadu, of which 35 per cent are contributed by private universities," he said. Ganesanathan Geathiswaran, Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka said India and Sri Lanka were separated by a narrow stretch of water, but connected by thousands of years of history and culture.

VIT founder and Chancellor G. Viswanathan said-,"While India was witnessing rapid economic growth, the expansion of higher education had not kept pace with that of developed nations." VIT vice-presidents Sankar Viswanathan and G.V. Selvam, vice-chancellor V.S. Kanchana Bhaaskaran, provice chancellor T. Thyagarajan, Director K. Sathiyanarayanan, Registrar, Jayabarathi .T, and additional registrar P.K. Manoharan, VIT Chennai took part.

Foot overbridges to be built at congested locations in city

The Greater Chennai Corporation will also establish air-conditioned bus shelters across the city. Tentative locations for these facilities are identified, says GCC Commissioner G.S. Sameeran

Aloysius Xavier Lopez
CHENNAI

The Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) will build foot overbridges at congested locations with a high footfall of commuters, across the city.

The civic body will also establish air-conditioned bus shelters across the city.

GCC Commissioner G.S. Sameeran conducted a meeting last week to develop the facilities. "The Greater Chennai Corporation has initiated the process of engaging consultants to undertake feasibility studies for the establishment of 30 air-conditioned bus shelters and development of 20 foot overbridges across the city. Tenders for consultancy have been called for," said Dr. Sameeran.

"Tentative locations for these facilities have been identified in consultation with the Greater Chennai Traffic Police and Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC). These locations will be provided to the selected consultants for detailed technical, traffic, site, and commercial feasibility assessment," he said.

Improving infrastructure: The Corporation proposes to build 20 foot overbridges across the city. J. JOHAN SATHYADAS

Based on the studies, the consultants will identify feasible locations and prepare appropriate financial and concession models for implementation. The projects are proposed to be implemented through a concession-based model, wherein the capital cost for construction and associated infrastructure will be invested by the concessionaire. In return, the concessionaire will be permitted to utilise the advertisement rights associated with the facilities, subject to applicable rules and regulations.

The annual concession fee offered by the bidder will be the principal bidding parameter for selection of the concessionaire.

The initiative aims to improve commuter amenities, pedestrian safety, and accessibility while leveraging private investment for creation and maintenance of modern urban infrastructure, said Dr. Sameeran.

The proposed initiative would facilitate the provision of improved passenger amenities through air-conditioned bus shelters, while avoiding corresponding capital expenditure liability to the GCC.

The initiative would also contribute towards improving the quality, comfort, and overall standard of public transport infrastructure within the city. In order to regulate the installation, operation, maintenance, advertisement rights, payment of licence fee, responsibilities of the firms and the GCC, safety requirements and eventual ownership of the assets, it is proposed to permit the installation of air-conditioned bus shelters as a pilot project and as an initiative of CSR, subject to conditions.

"The exact location, alignment, dimensions and extent of each bus shelter shall be verified and approved by the GCC before commencement of work," the Commissioner said.

'Everyday life, people, and natural spaces make the city special'

Shobha Menon, Founder, Nizhal, a Chennai-based environmental organisation

Everything is special about Chennai because it is our city, the one we live in.

The city is also one we must protect and safeguard.

Celebrating Chennai must be the norm, and I believe this must happen every day, not just for a day, week or month.

It is the everyday life of the city, its people, its neighbourhoods and its natural spaces that make it special.

While it is certainly good to see community engagement through neighbourhood heritage walks and talks this month, I deeply feel it is time we also encouraged and facilitated such engagement in simple but proactive citizen actions that can bring about changes in their own neighbourhoods. After all, it is when people feel connected to their neighbourhoods and take an interest in what happens around them that real change can begin.

I believe that great changes can be brought about through sustained and diligent local action and give us cleaner, safer, greener streets. With genuine support networks within communities, we can catalyse win-win connections all around. That, I think, is the need of the hour, and that, I would call, a true celebration of Chennai.

(As told to Geetha Srimathi)

Timings
CHENNAI

MONDAY, AUG. 17		
RISE	05:57	SET 18:29
RISE	09:49	SET 21:45
TUESDAY, AUG. 18		
RISE	05:57	SET 18:29
RISE	10:39	SET 22:25
WEDNESDAY, AUG. 19		
RISE	05:58	SET 18:28
RISE	11:31	SET 23:08

Chennai Weather	max	min
Tiruvallur	38	26
Chennai Airport	38	28
Chennai City	38	27

Chennai Airport Today
36°C The weather will be very warm and uneasy. Night will also be comfortable. Chances of light rain and thundershowers.

Chennai Airport Tomorrow
35°C Morning will be comfortable. Day will be warm. Night will also be comfortable. Spell of light rain and thundershowers may occur.

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THE HINDU
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Research achieves its highest purpose when it serves society: C.P. Radhakrishnan

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan on Sunday said research achieves its highest purpose when it serves society. Indian research was being well respected in the whole world, he said.

Delivering his address at the 22nd convocation of the SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) at Kattankulathur, he said: "We never wanted to encash our research. Recalling that on the directions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the COVID vaccine from India was sent to over 100 countries free of cost. That is the greatness of India."

He recalled his recent meeting with the Speaker of Kenyan Parliament, who thanked India for COVID vaccine. India's COVID vaccine has saved the entire humanity. India was always for peace, development, and humanity, he said.

Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan presenting degree certificate to a student at the 22nd convocation of SRMIST at Kattankulathur on Sunday. Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar and Chancellor T.R. Paarivendhar are also seen. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

The Vice-President appreciated SRMIST for building an academic ecosystem that promoted interdisciplinary learning, creativity, entrepreneurship, and critical thinking; its emphasis on translating research into practical solutions that improve lives, strengthen industry and contribute to sustainable development.

In his speech, Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar said: "We have got a very lengthy heritage of science and technology in our country. What we require today is: we must be proud of our yesteryear's, earlier technology, earlier science. Even if we are going ahead in today's technology, we must be proud of what we had in our ancient times."

SRMIST Chancellor T.R. Paarivendhar; Pro-Chancellor (Administration) Ravi Pachamuthu; Pro-Chancellor (Academics) P. Sathyanarayanan; Vice-Chancellor C. Muthamizhchelvan; and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

R. Velusamy, President - Automotive Business, Mahindra & Mahindra Limited was conferred the degree of doctor of science (*Honoris Causa*).

Across all campuses, a total of 11,684 graduates were eligible for degrees this year under the Faculty of Engineering and Technology. The Vice-President also unveiled a 32-foot statue of Founder Chancellor Dr. T. R. Paarivendhar at Vendhar Museum.

Cinema under the stars

Marina Beach came alive on Sunday as the city gathered for *The Hindu* Made of Chennai's Moonlight Cinema, enjoying the screening of *Vikram* and *Theri,* by the sea. Casagrand presents *The Hindu* Made of Chennai, co-powered by AU Small Finance Bank; Associate Partner: Andhra Pradesh Tourism, Joy Alukkas, Orchid The International School, Sunfeast Supermilk; Education Partner: Hindustan Group of Institutions; Mobility Partner: Toyota; Good Food Partner: Akshaykalpa Organic; Protein Partner: Licious; Overseas Education Partner: StudyIn; Movie Partner: Kalaippuli S. Thanu presents V creations, RKFI; Radio Partner: Big FM. R. RAGU

CBI re-registers BSP leader murder case following HC order

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

A special team of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday visited the spot where the then Bahujan Samaj Party's Tamil Nadu president K. Armstrong was murdered.

After re-registering the case following the orders of the Madras High Court, investigators of the Special Task Branch visited the scene of crime on Venugopal Samy Street in Perambur, police sources said.

Armstrong was hacked to death by a gang near his residence in Chennai on July 5, 2024.

The case initially investigated and chargesheeted by the Greater Chennai Police was transferred to the central agency by the Madras High Court on September 24, 2025, while passing orders in a petition filed by the BSP leader's brother K. Immanuel, who sought a CBI probe as the local police had allegedly failed to investigate the case properly. The court also quashed the 7,411-page chargesheet filed by the Greater Chennai Police in the case. The Supreme Court stayed the order of the Madras High Court after the Chennai Police Commissioner filed a Special Leave Petition (SLP) against the order.

However, the SLP was withdrawn by the State Government recently. Passing orders in the case the Supreme Court said that consequent to the dismissal of the SLP, the order dated September 24, 2025, of the Madras High Court directing quashing of the charge sheet filed by the State Police pursuant to investigation conducted in the case would remain and "the CBI will step in as the investigating agency".

Student death over drug issue painful: Vice-President

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Calling upon students to stay away from the menace of drugs, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan on Sunday said that it was "very painful" for him to read about the death of a college student in Coimbatore, who was killed after he passed on information about the prevalence of drugs, and further said he felt as if he had lost someone in his family.

In his address during the 22nd convocation of the SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, the Vice-President said: "I also urge all of you to always stay away from the menace of drugs and all forms of substance abuse. We should not get controlled by an external force, rather our mind should get controlled by ourselves."

New path proposed to link Radha Nagar Subway with station

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Southern Railway, along with CUMTA, has planned an alternative and safe pathway to the Chromepet Railway Station from the Radha Nagar subway side. Upon completion, the facility will provide safe and convenient entry and exit passageways for passengers accessing the station from the Radha Nagar side.

Citing the news article "Lack of safe access to platforms puts Radha Nagar residents at risk" published in *The Hindu* on Saturday, the Chennai Division of Southern Railway, in a release, acknowledged the safety concerns.

Considering the technical aspects of the subway located 120 metres away from the railway station, the Southern Railway has planned to create a new accessway, it said. While footpaths are available on both sides across the already constructed Radha nagar subway, the railway officials have found that the subway is situated approximately 120 metres away from the platform end and has no direct connection to the railway platforms.

Providing the proposed pathway would require passengers to walk for a considerable distance along the railway tracks between the suburban tracks and fast line tracks. Such an arrangement would pose grave safety risk to passengers and is operationally unviable, it said. These technical and safety concerns were also duly brought to the notice of the Madras High Court, which subsequently disposed of the matter, directing that the representation be considered in accordance with law, it added.

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SCHEDULE

Films	Star cast / Director	Language(s)	Territory	Theatrical release date	Term	Rights
BLAST ("Original Film")	Star Cast: Arjun Sarja, Abirami and others Director: Subash K. Raj	Original: Tamil	Worldwide (India Exclusive & Outside India Non-Exclusive)	28th May 2026	Perpetual	The linear rights to exploit and distribute the Film(s), including but not limited to: 1. Linear Distribution rights; 2. Terrestrial Television rights; 3. Non-exclusive Subtitling Rights in all Languages of the World including English, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and Hindi 4. Syndication Rights; 5. Ancillary Rights; 6. Clip Rights; 7. Doordarshan Rights; 8. Simulcast Rights 9.Dubbing Rights in all Indian Languages 10.New Exploitation Rights and New Exploitation Methods
BLAST ZONE Telugu dubbed version of the Original Film titled **"BLAST"**		Telugu dubbed				
BLAST Kannada dubbed version of the Original Film titled **"BLAST"**		Kannada dubbed		NA		
BLAST Malayalam dubbed version of the Original Film titled **"BLAST"**		Malayalam dubbed		NA		
BLAST ZONE Hindi dubbed version of the Original Film titled **"BLAST"**		Hindi and other Indian Languages	Exclusive World	NA		
		Zulu	World -non-exclusive	NA		

Dated : 17th August 2026,
Place : Chennai
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MUSIC DANCE DRAMA

The Music Academy Madras
Today: 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. At the Kasturi Srinivasan Hall - The Music Academy Madras – HCL Concerts – K Aathreyee Krishnaa (Vocal), Sahana Sreeram (Violin), Guruvayoor Lakshman (Mridangam).

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,
East Mada Street, Mylapore, Chennai-4
is celebrating "BhavaNonam"
between 17- 21 August 2026
Today: 17th August: High Tea at 5.30 pm, 6.00 pm: Inauguration: Chief Guest: Sri M.K.Narayanan, Former National Security Adviser & Former Governor of West Bengal, Guests of Honour: Sri Gokulam Gopalan, Chairman Gokulam Group, Entrepreneur & Educationist, Sri Rajiv Menon, Indian Film Director, Cinematographer & Actor, Sri N.Ravi, Chairman, Bhavan's Chennai Kendra presides, Welcome address by Dr.Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti, 6.30 pm: "Kathakali-Narakasura Vadham by Natyakala-School of Dance. Tomorrow: 18th August : 6.30 pm: "Kerala Musical Ensemble" by Sudeep Palanad & Team.
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C Charulatha - Veena, Kaushik Sridhar, Harihara Subramaniam. Concert dedicated to Smt. Andal & Sri. V Ananthanarayanan. Today 6.15 p.m at Ragasudha Hall.

Narada Gana Sabha Trust
Ph: 24993201
Today Main Hall (Sathguru Gnanananda Hall) Pancha Bhootha Bharatham. Theme- "Vayu - Air" 6.15 pm Talk by Dr. Sudha Seshayyan. Dancer - Christopher Gurusamy, Musician - Vignesh Ishwar. Tomorrow - Theme - "Akasa- Sky" 6.15 pm Talk by Dr.Sudha Seshayyan. 6.30 p.m Dancer- Harine-Jeevitha, Musician- Dr. Gayathri Girish. All are welcome.

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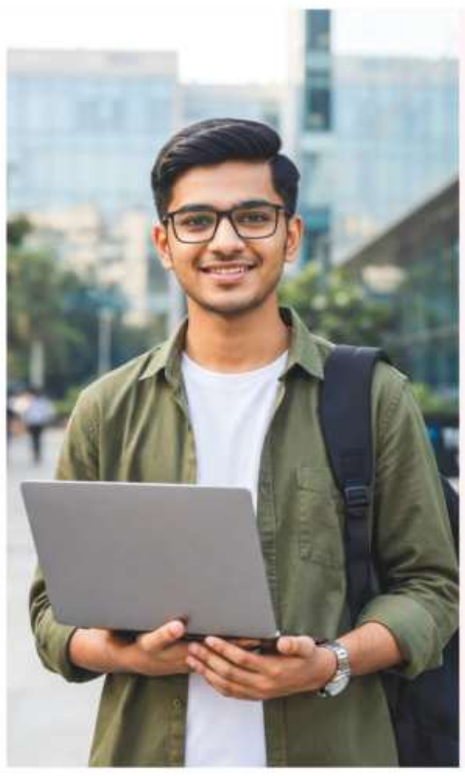

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From Page One

Ennore fisherfolk stage protest over mass fish deaths in Kosasthalaiyar

The incident comes amid long-standing concerns over pollution in the Ennore estuary and the Kosasthalaiyar.

The area has been affected by industrial effluents, sewage, coolant water, and fly ash from the concentration of industries and thermal power plants around the estuary.

Fisherfolk sought a detailed report on the nature of the effluents that had entered the waterbody, including whether they were toxic, and which industries or companies were responsible for the discharge.

"Such kind of effluent release has become a regular incident now. How can we make a livelihood by fishing if this is the case," said Madhanagopal, a fisherman.

Demand compensation

They also sought compensation for the loss of livelihood. The fisherfolk said the estuary was an important fish-breeding area, and thousands of fish had died in the incident. They demanded compensation equivalent to one year's livelihood, saying they had never witnessed a fish kill on this scale.

Their third demand was for employment opportunities in the industries and thermal power plants in the area. Vishanth, a local fisherman, said the community had been promised jobs when the thermal power plants were established, but only around 500 people were provided employment initially.

"Our livelihoods have already been affected by fly ash and hot coolant water," he said. The MLA assured the protesting fisherfolk that jobs would be provided to eligible members of the local communities.

INBRIEF

Vasan condemns death of two school students in Chennai

Tamil Maanila Congress (Moopanar) leader G.K. Vasan on Sunday condemned the recent death of two students at a State-run school at Tiruvottiyur in Chennai and called for a crackdown on illegal drugs in the State. Citing a media report, Mr. Vasan said it was the duty of the government to get to the motive behind the murder, arrest those involved, and ensure they were punished. He also called for awareness against the use of illegal drugs among school and college students.

CM condoles constable's death, announces ₹30-lakh solatium

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Sunday condoled the death of a constable who fainted while being on the Independence Day parade duty at Fort St. George in Chennai and died while under treatment. An official press release said Mr. Vijay was saddened by the death of A. Dharmaraj, a Grade-I constable attached to the Drums Bagpiper band of the Tamil Nadu Special Police Training Centre at Avadi. Dharmaraj was admitted to the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital and died later. Mr. Vijay conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family and ordered payment of ₹30 lakh in relief.

Large number of applications for registering exotic animals pending before Forest Dept.

Sources say around 2,000 applications are pending before the Chief Wildlife Warden. The process also involves an inquiry and a physical verification of the location where the animals will be kept

Geetha Srimathi
CHENNAI

A large number of applications for registration of exotic animals is pending before the Tamil Nadu Forest Department, while the State faces a shortage of facilities for housing exotic wildlife when it is seized.

According to sources, around 2,000 applications are pending before the Chief Wildlife Warden, the final authority of approval in the State. The number of applications pending in the districts is higher as applications are first scrutinised by the district authorities before being forwarded to the Chief Wildlife Warden.

A senior official of the Forest Department confirmed that a large number of applications was pending and attributed the backlog to the transition from PARIVESH 1.0 to PARIVESH 2.0. When the new portal was introduced, several applicants had filed their applications on PARIVESH 1.0. It remains unclear whether these applications will be migrated to the new platform or fresh ones have to be filed, the official said. However, the portal transition was not the only reason, the official said, pointing out that the demand for exotic wildlife was also high. The number of applications has implications for the department's ability to scrutinise documents and conduct physical verification of animals and facilities. Under the Living Animal Species (Reporting and Registration) Rules, 2024, possession of animals covered under Schedule IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act has to be reported and registered. The process involves scrutiny of the application, an inquiry, and physical verification of the facility before a registration certificate is issued.

Limited space: Activists say there is a lack of dedicated facilities to house exotic animals after they are seized. IMAGE USED FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE

Chief Wildlife Warden Rakesh Kumar Dogra said the scrutiny and approval of applications was a long and complex process, involving verification of the information with the Forest Departments of other States, especially in the case of species listed in the CITES Appendices. The applications were being processed in accordance with the prescribed norms.

Another challenge is the lack of infrastructure to house exotic animals after they are seized, activists said. Tamil Nadu does not have dedicated facilities for quarantining and accommodating exotic wildlife taken into custody by enforcement agencies.

This has emerged as a concern in the ongoing investigation in Erode involving exotic animals, days after a video of actor Vikram playing with a Lar Gibbon at the residence of Chennai businessman C.K. Ranganathan, as officials are also considering where the animals could be housed if they are confiscated.

Unlike native wildlife, seized exotic animals cannot be released in their natural habitats. They need secure facilities where they can be quarantined and housed while their provenance, ownership, and legal status are established, said animal welfare activist and conservationist Shravan Krishnan.

Conservationists said the lack of holding facilities, coupled with the number of pending applications, could hamper the effective regulation of the trade and possession of exotic wildlife and the action that follows when violations are detected.

Irrigation channel, pond rejuvenation work to commence under VB-G RAM G

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department will begin rejuvenation of 10,185 irrigation channels and 809 ponds across Tamil Nadu from Monday in preparation for the Northeast monsoon.

The work will be taken up under Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) or VB-G RAM G. According to sources, desilting of waterbodies and irrigation channels, ahead of the Northeast monsoon, will help maximise rainwater storage, raise the groundwater table, and improve irrigation. It will also help control floods in times of heavy rain.

Minister for Rural Development and Water Resources N. Anand will inaugurate the work, to be carried out in 37 districts, excluding Chennai, at an estimated cost of ₹507.92 crore. Mr. Anand told *The Hindu* that the desilting of ponds, ooranis, and channels would be taken up after due measurement by surveyors. The department will coordinate with farmers, panchyat representatives, and volunteering agencies that work with channels and water bodies and ensure the work is done properly. The payment will be done only after the work is completed. "At the same time, since in some places persons with disabilities are also part of the VB-G RAM G, we will ensure that they are not disturbed in any manner. The work will be completed by September-end, when the monsoon is likely to begin," he said.

Since the entire work cannot be done manually, we have sought CSR funds for earth movers, and other machinery.

Farmers with whom *The Hindu* spoke, said though this was a welcome idea, VB-G RAM G workers alone would not be able to complete the work on their own. "In some villages, especially in the Delta districts, farmers come together to desilt channels. In such cases, the government's desilting work can be clubbed with ours to make it more effective," said Ravichandran, a farmer of Nannilam.

A total of 2,514 channels and 53 ooranies are to be desilted in Thanjavur alone. Ramanathapuram has the highest number of ponds to be desilted with 137.

Annamalai levels graft charge against some T.N. Ministers, claims to possess audio clip as proof

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

We The Leaders founder K. Annamalai said on Sunday that some Ministers in the TVK-led government had demanded a cut ranging from 2% to 4%. But he did not name anyone. He also claimed to have an "audio" (clip) to prove his charge.

"They say corruption has stopped. We have been watching, and it has started again. It is true that Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay is against corruption. They are not getting it in major tenders. Many Ministers have just now started receiving. I even have the audio [clip]. They have come [elected] without giving money for votes. '[But they are saying] We have given money for votes. So, give me 2%, 3%, 4%'," Mr. Annamalai said, speaking at a meeting of his supporters in Chennai.

According to him, he was bringing it to the notice of Mr. Vijay now "before we rake up this issue after a year".

Mr. Annamalai urged the Chief Minister to "bridle" his Ministers and officials. As for the functioning of the TVK government, he said, "Whether the people like it or not, a revolution has occurred in Tamil Nadu after so long. A Chief Minister has come to power. I keep saying, 'let us give them a year'. Of the 108 MLAs, 101 are first-time MLAs."

K. Annamalai

"Let us give them a year and let them do their job. If they do not do their job well, we will be the first one to level charges against them. They are doing something right and something wrong. When we point out the mistakes, they have corrected them too. We check the functioning of the government and give them reports. When we point out how many Tasmac shops are still within 500 metres [of educational institutions and places of worship] they take action. I would definitely appreciate it. It is a good political approach," Mr. Annamalai said.

Pointing out that the 2026 Budget sought to save ₹15,000 crore, he urged Mr. Vijay to earmark ₹5,000 crore each for three priorities: protecting waterbodies in rural areas; improving the infrastructure in government schools; and developing rural areas.

Referring to the criticism that he was the BJP's B Team, Mr. Annamalai said, "[Union Home Minister and senior BJP leader] Amit Shah asked me to shift to Delhi and get a post. When he said I should be in Delhi for about three years, I said it would not work for me and I would remain in Tamil Nadu. Let me stay here with my friends and serve the people. If the BJP workers did not believe it, they could check it out with Mr. Shah when he visited the State next."

CM condemns 'killing' of three Tamils by foresters in Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Sunday condemned the "killing" of three Tamils by the Karnataka Forest Department in an alleged exchange of fire in the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary in Chamarajanagar district on Saturday.

In a post on X, Mr. Vijay said Anthony Sami, John Rose Peter, and Kumar from Tamil Nadu had been living in Hanur taluk of Karnataka. "They were shot dead by Karnataka Forest Department personnel in the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary in the early hours of August 15. I strongly condemn this killing. The explanation given by the Karnataka Forest Department regarding the incident is unacceptable," he said.

He also demanded an impartial inquiry and the constitution of a high-level inquiry committee.

Stalin's demand

Earlier, DMK president M.K. Stalin questioned the Chief Minister's "silence" on the incident. He demanded compensation and government jobs for the kin of the deceased.

He alleged that there was an attempt by the Karnataka government to safeguard those involved in the killing. "It should be prevented. A case should be filed, and there should be an impartial judicial inquiry," he said.

SOAS varsity fellowship on SCs, STs welfare aims to take T.N. model to global audience

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A three-month-long fellowship at SOAS University of London aimed at taking the research on the Dravidian movement and social justice to a global audience is nearing completion, with its first recipient from Tamil Nadu researching Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) welfare governance in the State.

The Ambedkar-Kalaignar Visiting Fellowship was initiated by Chennai-based technology entrepreneur V. Sabarisan and his wife, Senthamarai, daughter of former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, "with an objective to bring the Dravidian movement's core principles of social justice, self-respect, and federalism to wider academic and policy audiences."

The fellowship has been initiated 'with an objective to bring the Dravidian movement's core principles of social justice, self-respect, and federalism to wider academic and policy audiences'

Mr. Sabarisan told *The Hindu* he had donated 170 books on the Dravidian movement and social justice to SOAS two years ago.

During a later visit to the University, he found students reading the books with interest, which prompted him to initiate this fellowship, which covers travel, visa fees, a three-month stipend, and term fees, enabling a researcher, journalist, or policymaker to develop and share their research work with an international academic audience. This was the inaugural year of the fellowship, and of the 88 applicants, Bagavanidhi M., a researcher, who has a decade of experience working on the rights of SCs and STs, was selected.

Evolution of mechanism

His research examines the evolution of SCs and STs Sub-Plan governance in Tamil Nadu, including the shift from planning-based mechanisms to legislative enforcement and the conditions behind the enactment of the Tamil Nadu Development Action Plan for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Act, 2024.

Mr. Bagavanidhi said this fellowship enabled him an opportunity to interact with students and scholars from around the world at SOAS University of London and gave a new understanding and perspective of various issues.

'A uniform 50% increase in LS seats is pulling the wool over someone's eyes'

Udhav Naig
CHENNAI

Advocating against undertaking delimitation on the basis of population, Congress Rajya Sabha Member Praveen Chakravarty said on Sunday that the proposal to uniformly increase the Lok Sabha seats for all States was pulling the wool over someone's eyes.

In an interview with *The Hindu* in Chennai, he said the Tamil Nadu Congress does not believe that the number of seats should change if the population increases.

"Tamil Nadu's share [of Lok Sabha seats] will roughly go down to 30 seats (if we accept the seats based on population). Why should we accept being punished for our successes? The (proposed) 50% increase in seats is pulling the wool over someone's eye. While it seems like it's a uniform increase for everybody, let's take Uttar Pradesh as an example. Uttar Pradesh has 80 seats, while Tamil Nadu and Puducherry combined have 40 seats. So, the difference is 40 seats. If everybody gets a 50% increase, the 40 more voices that we need to oppose will become 60 more voices. So, we are already in a minority compared to the North. Why widen this gap?" he asked.

Praveen Chakravarty

The Congress would ensure the number of seats in Lok Sabha remains the same (543) "after 2029, when Rahul Gandhi becomes Prime Minister," he said. Asked to reflect on the recent Gen Z protests in New Delhi against the Union government, which resulted in the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over paper leaks, Mr. Chakravarty said the younger generation sought a radical change and doesn't like the entrenched politics of the establishment.

"What I have observed during the Tamil Nadu election is that for the first time, it was such an age divide. Less than 40 in one direction, above 50 in another direction. Very similar to the Jantar Mantar protests. They don't like establishment entrenched politics. And it's really a challenge for all political parties, including my own. Fortunately, our leader, Mr. Rahul Gandhi has coped quite well," he said.

Regarding the recent Assembly election results, which saw the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, led by C. Joseph Vijay (now, Chief Minister), become the single largest party, and how he was one of the first to sense the ground swell of support for the TVK, the MP said: "Anybody who was actually doing surveys honestly and were true to what they saw realised that there was a strong desire for change. And the youth divide was extraordinary. Around 60% to 70% of people below 40 are saying that they want to give this new party a chance. And the third, the DMK never in its history has won a re-election. And, there's a reason for it. When it's in power, it just goes berserk."

He also said that the overwhelming support enjoyed by Mr. Vijay shouldn't be dismissed as mere "fandom". "The verdict basically changed all we knew about Tamil Nadu politics over the last three decades.," he said.

Commenting on the resignations of MLAs from the AIADMK who later joined the TVK, Mr. Praveen said the younger generation would not accept "political opportunism".

(For the full video interview, visit: https://newsth.live/PCinterview)

Correction

In the headline of the report "KKNPP has generated over 1.30 million units of power", it should read 130.63 billion units, and not as published. The error is regretted.

INBRIEF

CJI, BCI chief must not attend convocation: NLSIU students

Students and alumni of the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bengaluru, have opposed the participation of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Manan Kumar Mishra, Chairman of the Bar Council of India, at their convocation. "We stand in solidarity with the NALSAR [University of Law, Hyderabad] in their request to reconsider the choice as the chief guest and express strong disapproval of the CJI attending the convocation of NLSIU," an open letter stated.

Arunachal engineering student found dead in Kerala

A 20-year-old B.Tech. student from Arunachal Pradesh, Michi Marpu, was found dead at his rented house at Kothamangalam in Kerala, on Saturday, triggering a probe. He was a third-year student at the Mar Athanasius College of Engineering. A section of students said he was upset over the "year break system", under which only those who scored 22 credits in Semester 4 could move to the next semester. (*People in distress can contact Tele MANAS: 14416*)

BJP's P. C. George retracts election fund misuse charge

BJP leader P. C. George, who had alleged that a large portion of the election funds for the party's campaign in Poonjar constituency in Kerala had been misappropriated, on Sunday withdrew the charge. Mr. George said the party leadership showed him the accounts after his speech and that he was now convinced there had been no financial irregularities. "After my speech, the party leadership showed me the accounts... I am convinced that nobody stole any money," he said.

Omission of *Vande Mataram* sparks political row in Kerala

BJP says skipping it was a 'serious constitutional issue', says State has bowed to political pressure; CPI questions Cong.'s 'secular' credentials over full song rendition at AICC office, party-ruled States

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The *Vande Mataram* question dominated the political debate in Kerala on Sunday, a day after the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) government skipped the rendition of the National Song during the Independence Day function.

BJP State president Rajeev Chandrasekhar said the omission was a serious constitutional and legal issue. It is unacceptable for the State government to take a stand on issues related to nationalism by bowing to political pressures, he said. "Why is there a different approach only in Kerala when the National Anthem and National Song are part of official functions in Congress-ruled States such as Karnataka, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

> Why is there a different approach only in Kerala when the National Anthem and National Song are sung in Congress-ruled States
> **RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR**
> President, Kerala BJP

BJP national president Nitin Nabin, in a post on X, said that bowing down before extremists has now become the Congress's permanent policy.

"This is not merely an incident of stopping a song, but a mark of that dynastic arrogance under which the Congress is averse to every single thing in India that this nation takes pride in," he said.

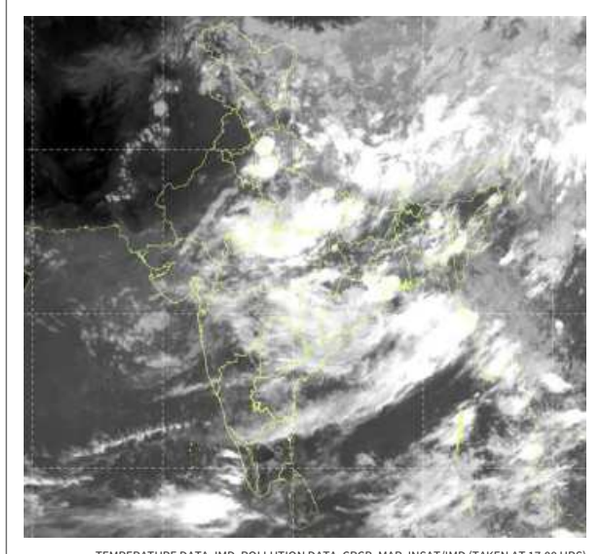
On the other hand, CPI State secretary Binoy Viswam questioned the full rendition of *Vande Mataram* at the AICC headquarters in Delhi and in Congress-ruled States.

"A secular party can never agree to the rendition of the full version of *Vande Mataram* as was done at the AICC headquarters. The Congress lacks ideological clarity and is not sure of its own politics. If all their claims as the inheritors of Gandhi and Nehru's ideology are true, they should apologise for what happened," he said.

RELATED REPORTS ON
» PAGE 11

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy to Very Heavy Rainfall with isolated Extremely Heavy Rainfall very likely at isolated places over Gangetic West Bengal and Odisha. Heavy Rainfall very likely at isolated places over Assam & Meghalaya, Bihar, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi. Thunderstorm accompanied with Lightning very likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam & Meghalaya.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	33.2	25.7	Kurnool	—	32.8	25.7
Ahmedabad	—	31.9	26.3	Lucknow	5.9	31.4	26
Aizawl	37	32.6	22.4	Madurai	—	39	25.1
Bengaluru	—	30.3	20.6	Mangaluru	17	29.7	24
Bhopal	7.6	26.8	22.8	Mumbai	7.9	31.1	25.1
Bhubaneswar	52.8	29.6	22.8	Mysuru	—	30	20
Chandigarh	—	36.2	25.6	New Delhi	—	34.4	27.2
Chennai	—	35.3	27.8	Patna	—	35.6	29
Coimbatore	—	33.3	21.6	Port Blair	—	31.5	27.2
Dehradun	—	29.4	25.1	Prayagraj	8.8	34.5	26.6
Gangtok	—	23.5	18.8	Puducherry	1	36.5	22.8
Goa	14.8	32	24.4	Pune	2.6	29	21.4
Guwahati	—	36.5	27.6	Raipur	—	27.1	—
Hubballi	—	00.0	00.0	Ranchi	—	31	23.2
Hyderabad	—	—	24.2	Shillong	—	25.5	18.5
Imphal	—	29.3	23.5	Shimla	0.2	27.2	20.5
Jaipur	1.3	—	26.8	Srinagar	—	—	—
Kochi	4.4	30.4	24.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	31	25.3
Kohima	—	—	—	Tiruchirappalli	—	39.7	27
Kolkata	2.0	33.4	26.5	Vijayawada	—	—	—
Kozhikode	3.4	33.1	25.4	Visakhapatnam	—	32	27.9

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.44	.38	.35	115	102	Moderate
Bengaluru	.25	.17	119	11	31	Moderate
Chennai	5	7	.30	12	128	Moderate
Delhi	.19	.34	105	173	307	Poor
Hyderabad	6	.13	.11	32	63	Good
Kolkata	7	.13	.45	9	30	Good
Lucknow	.37	.12	.25	33	80	Good
Mumbai	5	.13	.25	28	70	Good
Pune	—	.11	.63	40	57	Good
Visakhapatnam	.22	.69	.15	34	74	Good

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Brajrajnagar, Bhiwandi, Maharashtra recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 334 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 14

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Will protect farmers, says Karnataka CM

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

While emphasising that it was his duty to protect farmers' interests in the Cauvery issue, Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has said it is equally important to uphold the law.

Speaking at Bhagamandala in Kodagu district on Sunday, Mr. Shivakumar pointed out that the reservoirs in the State were still not completely full. Along with the challenge of sustaining the State's farmers, there was a need to uphold the law.

He said there were separate rules for water-sharing during periods of shortage and distress, and claimed that the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) had also issued the necessary directions in this regard. "If we do not follow the law, we may end up in a situation where control of the dam has to be handed over to the Central government," Mr. Shivakumar said.

School owner lands in row over remarks

The Hindu Bureau
THRISSUR

Controversy has erupted over the remarks by the owner of Dr. Raju Davis International School at Mala in Thrissur district of Kerala, after he reportedly told students who did not attend an Independence Day programme organised at the school to "go to Pakistan".

The remarks were allegedly made by school owner Raju Davis in a voice note shared in a WhatsApp group of parents. According to the messages, students who remained absent from Independence Day celebrations were portrayed as lacking in patriotism. Mr. Davis reportedly warned that students who did not attend the programme would not be allowed to attend classes.

The issue also prompted the Students Federation of India (SFI) Mala area committee to take out a protest march to the school. Mr. Davis later expressed regret.

Woman, son held for killing two for gold

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

A 38-year-old woman and her minor son have been arrested in Siddipet district of Telangana for allegedly murdering at least two women for gold.

On August 8, villagers of Ramakkapeta spotted a partially burnt body near agricultural fields. The Dubbak police registered a case and later identified the victim as a woman named Athikam Vijaya, 45, a resident of Bhoompally village. The police used CCTV footage to identify the killers as a woman from Bhoompally and her teenaged son, who together ran a tea point. They targeted women who could be robbed and used their outlet to observe people and gather information. The police said that on May 28, the duo murdered another woman, Kunta Rekha, and burnt her body in the Achamayyapalli forest area. The police seized property worth around ₹10 lakh.

Families withdraw protest against sanctuary firing; bodies handed over

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

The post-mortem of the three suspected poachers killed in an alleged exchange of fire in the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary at Hanur in Karnataka was conducted at the Mysore Medical College and Research Institute (MMC&RI) in Mysuru on Sunday, only after relatives and villagers withdrew their protest.

MMC&RI Dean Dr. Dakshayani confirmed that all three bodies were handed over to the families.

The families had earlier refused to give their consent for the autopsy until they received a written assurance of compensation and punitive action against the officials involved.

Meanwhile, the protest that began in Hanur on Saturday, intensified on Sunday. Several organisations joined a demonstration and tried to block the road to Malai Mahadeshwara Hills, demanding action against the forest staff involved in the shooting.

More compensation

Amid the tension, Hanur MLA Manjunath held discussions with the families of the deceased and eventually persuaded the protesters to withdraw the agitation. In addition to the ₹5 lakh compensation for each of the three families, the MLA promised an additional ₹10 lakh each from his personal funds.

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said the forest staff had informed him that guns and two bags of meat of wild animals had been recovered from those killed in the shoot-out.

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ANNA NAGAR EAST, CHENNAI – 600 102.

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Applications are invited from Retired District Judges with age limit below 62 years as on 01.01.2027 for appointment as **Adjudicating Officer** on re-employment basis in TNRERA. Further details are available at TNRERA Website **https://rera.tn.gov.in.**

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DIPR/696/Display/2026

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Categories	Registration Fees
OC/BC/BCM/MBC & DNC	Rs.500/-
SC / SCA / ST	Rs.250/-

Registration fees shall be paid through Debit Card / Credit Card / Net Banking / UPI through online. The registration fees may be paid through demand draft drawn in favour of **"The Secretary, TNEA", Payable at Chennai.** The demand draft must be drawn on or after **17.08.2026** and to be submitted at the nearby TNEA Facilitation Center (TFC).

Commencement of Registration through Online	17.08.2026
Last Date of Registration through Online	31.08.2026

During online application registration, the applicants should upload their original certificates and select their preferred choice of TFC for original certificates verification through online. In case of any discrepancies, the applicant will be intimated through registered mobile number and e-mail id to report at the scheduled date and time to TFC Centre.

All information, guidelines, schedules of events relating to TNEA process will be made available through the above web portals only.

Help Line : 1800-425-0110
Email: tneacare@gmail.com

Secretary
Tamil Nadu Engineering Admissions

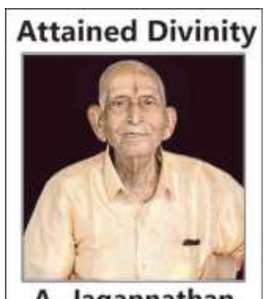
DIPR/681/DISPLAY/2026

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Smt Sathya Prema (81)
W/o P. Venugopala Iyengar, passed away in Bangalore on Sunday, August 2026. The Last rites will be held at Kallahalli Crematorium at 11 am on 17.08.2026, Monday.
She is survived by her husband, brother, sister, son-in-law, and two grandchildren.

Attained Divinity



A. Jagannathan
The First Assistant Director of Public Libraries (Rtd)
The Funeral 17-08-2026 | 9 - 10.30 am
New No 56, Old No 44, Vellala Street Aminjikarai, Chennai - 600 029
Near SBI Aminjikarai
Mourned by:
Wife: J. Thulasi, *Son:* W. J. Surresh, *Daughters:* J. Latha Ethirajan, J. Dhannalakshmi Sridhar
98404 45567
EYES DONATED

DEATH

Dr. B. S. M. AUGUSTINE
DOB: 08.12.1938 - DOD: 15.08.2026
SQUADRON LEADER (RETD.)
M.E., M.Phil., Ph.D.,
Grad. AeS.I. (Production) & Grad. Ae.SI. (Maintenance)
Graduate Helicopter Engineering
PROFESSOR - AEROSPACE ENGINEERING
Coach- Basket Ball (NSNIS) / (International) & Athletics (NSNIS)
HOD Aeronautical Engineering
Hindustan College of Engineering & Sathyabama University
Funeral Service on 18.08.2026 at 4.00 PM, St. Marks Church, Camp Road. Burial at Thiruvanchery Graveyard.
Deeply mourned by Family & Friends
Ph: +918939678077

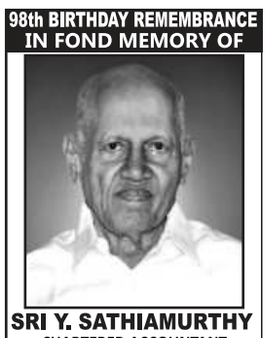
BIRTH CENTENARY

CENTENARY BIRTH YEAR
43rd ANNIVERSARY

K.KANNIAH
Born : 06.07.1926 Died : 17.08.1983
- Family Members

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

98th BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE IN FOND MEMORY OF



SRI Y. SATHIAMURTHY
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT
17.08.1928 - 16.08.2010
Family Members, Relatives & Friends.
Thirugnanam & Co
Paary & Sivasakthy Estates
Sathiamurthy Mohan VTC

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

REMEMBRANCE

DOB: 10 01 1940

DOD: 17 08 2022

Smt. RADHA
W/O. N. Thiagarajan
Fondly remembered by
Son: **T.Subramanian**
Daughters: **C.Usha Rani, T.Shanthi**
Sons-in-law, Daughter-in-law
Grand daughters, Grand sons...

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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that our client proposes to purchase and develop the property mentioned in the Schedule hereunder.

SCHEDULE

Property being land of an extent of 4 acres 69 cents, comprised in the following Survey numbers as follows,

S.No	Survey numbers	Extent (In Acres)	Present Owners
1.	114/1	1.24	Mr. K. Balaji, Mr. G.N. Raja and Mr. E. Wilson
2.	114/2	0.11	
3.	114/3	0.11	
4.	115/1	0.31	Mr. K. Nethaji, Mr. N. Prabhu and Mr. E. Wilson
5.	115/2	0.27	
6.	116/1A	0.36	
7.	116/2	0.29	
8.	116/1B	0.33	Mr. G.N. Raja and Mr. K. Nethaji
9.	147/1	0.55	Mr. K. Balaji and Mr. G.N. Raja
10.	147/2	1.12	
Total		4.69 Acres	

Situated at **SRINIVASAPURAM Village, Sriperumbudur Taluk, Kancheepuram District** and within the Sub - Registration District off Kunrathur and Registration District of Chennai South.

The presents owner represents that the said property was purchased by them under various Sale Deeds bearing Doc. Nos. 2506/1996, 2838/2004, 2840/2004, 2843/2004, 2852/2004, 11625/2014 and 11626/2014, registered at the Sub-Registrar of Kunrathur and since then the present owners, have been in absolute ownership, possession, and enjoyment of the property. Further the present owners assures that the said property is free from all encumbrances, claims and demands and the said property is not subject to any agreements, charges, litigations tenants and liens and except them no other person or persons have any right, title or interest over the said property.

Any person having any interest, right, claim or demand in respect of the above said lands and having custody of any original sale deeds or any other deeds whatsoever pertaining to the said lands, is/are hereby called upon to notify the undersigned in writing with documentary proof of the same within Fifteen Days (15 days) from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, it shall be conclusively presumed that no such claim or demand exists other than that of the aforementioned owners and the aforesaid property is free of all encumbrances, mortgages, charges and liens whatsoever and any claims and liabilities raised thereafter will not be binding on the present owners. The general public is also hereby cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid property/documents, and despite this caution, if they do, they shall be doing so at their sole risk and costs.

Ms. R. ANU PREETHY,
Advocate,
No. 18, VOC, Street, Nandavana Mettur,
Avadi, Chennai – 600 072.

United and free

India needs unity, not uniformity; dissent must not be seen as divisive

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day speech, his thirteenth, was delivered within an entirely new political context, shaped by the recent student protests that led to the resignation of his Education Minister. The protests may have waned, but their underlying and lingering reasons for the unrest remain a matter of serious concern for the country. Mr. Modi sought to offer hope, inspiration and purpose on the one hand while, on the other, built a new phantom labelled '*dimagi* naxals', who, he said, influenced policymaking and required purging. The speech was specifically addressed to the young citizens of the nation. Mr. Modi repeatedly stressed the need for big dreams, firm resolve and rapid execution, arguing that India could no longer think in incremental terms. He promised skill training for one crore youth over the next year to prepare India for the artificial intelligence era; free online coaching for competitive examinations to reduce the burden on families and improve access to opportunities; and renewed the government's emphasis on innovation, quantum technology, space, robotics, data centres and other emerging sectors. Mr. Modi reiterated his commitment to self-reliance in defence production, including advanced technologies such as drones and next-generation defence systems. All Indians would naturally appreciate these promises and the statement of purpose.

Whether Mr. Modi wanted, or tried, to build a unified national approach towards these challenges and their management is doubtful. India's progress is a continuum that should ideally have a compounding effect with each subsequent year. Comparing, in absolute terms, achievements before and after 2014, when he became Prime Minister, is neither statistically relevant nor politically prudent. The fact about India as it enters the 80th year as a free nation that fought off colonialism is that its challenges are unprecedented. It has a massive young population entering the workforce even as technology is disrupting life and work as never before. What India needs is an all-hands-on-the-deck approach, requiring a unified political will among parties and stakeholders that is unaffected by electoral contests. India also needs an indigenous understanding and philosophy of development rather than trying to mimic the techno-capitalism that is rattling advanced economies. This is a point that was underlined by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat in his Independence Day speech. Mr. Modi clearly sees the challenges; but he also sees, unfortunately, an enemy in every critic. As he leads the country into a new year of independence, perhaps he could consider new ideas, including those from his critics, instead of amplifying divisive ones.

Not just turbulence

India's aviation should not have to depend on chance for safety

The August 4, 2026, incident involving Air India flight AI 2379, from Phuket to Delhi, with 137 passengers and eight crew, now has two tracks. The first concerns its reclassification: the initial 'event of turbulence' is now a "serious incident" after inflight technical issues and a significant deviation in aircraft altitude caused injuries to more than 20 passengers and crew, quickly drawing in the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The subsequent probe by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, along with France's investigation authority, BEA, and technical representatives from Airbus, should unravel the multiple anomalies that briefly overtook the Airbus A320N – fault warnings across the hydraulic systems, elevator flight-control faults, autopilot disconnection, emergency-exit door indications and an engine anti-ice warning. Airbus's initial data is said to support the evidence of technical errors. However, it is the second track that has received much attention: the result of the pilot-in-command's post-flight screening for psychoactive substances.

The Tata Group-Singapore Airlines joint venture airline has been prodded into commencing the immediate and mandatory screening of its flight deck crew 'for any substances or unprescribed medications'. But the deeply discomfiting discovery has exposed the weak link in crew screening – the greater emphasis on pre- and post-flight breathalyser checks for alcohol than on testing for psychoactive substances, which falls under the Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) Section 5-Air Safety Series F Part V. In fact, the CAR – which applies to Air Traffic Controllers also – leans more towards random and post-flight/post-shift testing, with graded disciplinary action. With India's air carriers expanding operations, crew citing stress-related issues, and, separately, the availability of substances for medicinal or recreational use, the regulator must ensure stringent psychoactive substance testing and operational compliance. The DGCA's Medical Circular No. 02 of 2021, on 'over-the-counter (OTC) drugs and self-medication', highlights pilot cognitive/psychomotor skills impairment, drawing on the Mangaluru (2010) and Kozhikode (2020) fatal air accidents. Further, documented cases from the West reveal that even small levels of impairment can affect crew judgement, reaction time, coordination, and decision-making, the critical skills needed in the flight deck. Ensuring that fit crew are behind the controls is an aviation industry bedrock, and every Indian operator, large or growing, must uphold the highest standards. This was a lucky escape, but luck cannot be allowed to become a safety strategy.

India's democracy needs different electoral rhythms

Shashi Tharoor

Fourth-term Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for Thiruvananthapuram (Congress party), the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and the Sahitya Akademi Award-winning author of 29 books, including 'Our Living Constitution'

The "One Nation, One Election (ONOE)" proposal (to enforce a uniform, synchronised timeline for national and State elections across India) represents a profound misapprehension of the structural mechanics of the parliamentary system, and poses an existential threat to the federal architecture designed by the framers of the Constitution.

To align the distinct political rhythms of dozens of individual States with the central government, in the name of national uniformity, is to prioritise administrative convenience over democratic substance. The argument for synchronisation relies heavily on a superficial calculation of financial expenditure and an overblown narrative of governance paralysis. Yet, it ignores the fundamental constitutional friction that occurs when presidential mechanics are clumsily grafted onto a parliamentary democracy.

Flexibility at democracy's core

At the very heart of the parliamentary form of government is the principle that the executive branch derives its legitimacy directly from, and remains continuously accountable to, the legislature. Unlike a presidential system, where the executive is elected independently for a strict, unalterable calendar term, a parliamentary executive exists entirely at the pleasure of the legislative majority. A Prime Minister or a Chief Minister rules only as long as they command the confidence of the house. Consequently, the parliamentary system is inherently built around flexibility; terms are not rigidly fixed because the collapse of a governing coalition, a successful motion of no confidence, or a shifting legislative realignment must naturally trigger a democratic reset. That is why India's elections, which ran on the same timetable from 1952 to 1967, no longer do: governments at the State and the Centre fell at different times when they lost their legislative majorities, and were elected accordingly thereafter, leading to the current situation where some State or the other is going to the elections every year.

Imposing a fixed-term electoral calendar artificially binds the legislature, completely short-circuiting this parliamentary accountability mechanism. If a government falls, forcing a fixed timeline means that the electorate is stripped of its sovereign right to choose a new government for a full five-year mandate. Instead, the system must resort to truncated midterm Assemblies elected merely to serve out the unexpired remainder of the original calendar. This introduction of variable, short-term governance undermines the stability it claims to protect, creating weak, insecure "lame-duck" administrations whose bureaucrats, police forces and political opponents will simply run down the clock rather than engage in decisive long-term policymaking.

The alternative, of resorting to President's Rule when a State government falls, rather than holding a fresh election, is even more undemocratic. This would inevitably force a domino effect of constitutional crises that severely erodes the value of a citizen's vote. Under a synchronised system, the democratic leverage of the electorate is fundamentally distorted. A citizen voting in a midterm election to fill a two-year unexpired term is structurally handed less political bargaining power than a voter casting a ballot at the dawn of the five-year cycle. If full-term and midterm governments wield identical constitutional powers, it is a violation of democratic equity that their corresponding popular mandates carry unequal temporal weight. Furthermore, the logic of synchronisation dictates that if the national Parliament dissolves prematurely due to a fractured coalition in New Delhi, stable State legislative assemblies possessing absolute, robust majorities would be abruptly terminated by operation of law, simply to keep the national "one election" clock on course. To dissolve a functional, democratically elected State government because of a political realignment in New Delhi is a direct assault on the political sovereignty of that state's electorate, subordinating regional democratic choices to national political dynamics.

> The 'One Nation, One Election' proposal will erode State autonomy, distort electoral mandates, and weaken democratic accountability

National politics will overshadow States

This subordination exposes the deeply anti-federal undercurrents of the synchronisation agenda. India is fundamentally a union of States, a vast pluralistic landscape where regional identities, local economic contexts, and historical trajectories demand distinct political expressions. Federalism is not a mere administrative arrangement; it is a vital mechanism for cultural and political accommodation.

By combining State and national elections into a single mega-event, the distinct boundaries between localised issues and national narratives are blurred. In a synchronised ballot, national parties with vast financial apparatuses and dominant media presence naturally tend to overshadow regional players. Local grievances regarding regional infrastructure, provincial welfare, and cultural preservation risk being entirely subsumed by overarching national rhetoric or geopolitical theatre. Electorates are subtly coerced into prioritising national alignment over regional suitability, a phenomenon captured by the majoritarian push for uniform alignment under the guise of developmental efficiency. This dynamic pressures voters to instal identical parties at both the State and centre, penalising States that choose independent political paths and starving them of federal resources if they dissent from the national ruling party.

The financial justifications used to defend this centralisation of power are equally flawed. The claim that simultaneous elections will drastically cut public spending deliberately conflates the minimal, necessary administrative costs incurred by the State with the unregulated, private campaign expenditures of political parties. The official funds spent by the Election Commission of India to manage independent cycles are a drop in the ocean for an economy of India's scale, a small and necessary price to pay for maintaining a responsive democracy. Conversely, the vast sums of money circulated by political parties during campaigns actually function as a form of informal economic redistribution, temporarily generating widespread employment and shifting capital back down to printers, local transport networks, artisans, and working-class citizens. To restrict this economic circulation to once every five years under the banner of austerity is an argument that privileges elite fiscal preferences over the periodic economic stimuli that campaigns provide to the informal sector.

Moreover, the complaint that the continuous cycle of elections creates a perpetual state of policy paralysis due to the Model Code of Conduct is an administrative myth. The electoral code is designed strictly to prevent the ruling executive from announcing opportunistic, brand-new financial handouts or executing politically-motivated bureaucratic transfers during the immediate run-up to a vote. It does not freeze the wheels of the State, nor does it halt the execution of ongoing public works, routine governance, or essential administrative duties. The narrative of paralysis is often deployed by executives to excuse structural inefficiencies that have nothing to do with the electoral calendar. In reality, the frequency of independent State elections serves as a critical check on executive hubris, forcing political representatives to regularly return to the doorsteps of their constituents with folded hands. This continuous accountability cycle keeps political parties responsive to shifting public sentiment, whereas a single, synchronised event leaves a five-year void where representatives are essentially insulated from the popular will.

Diminishing the voter's voice

Ultimately, the drive toward uniform elections is an attempt to transform the organic, messy vitality of a decentralised parliamentary democracy into the rigid, totalising efficiency of an authoritarian state model. It reduces the sovereign voter to a cog in an administrative machine, strips States of their distinct political timelines, and creates dangerous vacuums where insecure, short-term governments cannot effectively rule. By treating elections as an expensive administrative burden to be minimised rather than the primary lifeblood of public accountability, the ONOE model devalues the constitutional spirit of the republic. True democratic strength does not lie in forced conformity or synchronised clocks, but in the enduring resilience of a federal compact that allows its many distinct regions to live, breathe, and vote according to their own unique conditions.

India is losing West Asia, but it is not too late

Raja Karthikeya

Adjunct Fellow and Lead for West Asia Studies at the Takshashila Institution

India is losing West Asia, one country at a time. Even as the region undergoes a once-in-a-generation shift in its security architecture and political battle lines, it is unclear what India's strategy is ...or whether New Delhi has one at all.

It was not supposed to be this way. Just 10 years ago, India was rapidly remaking its footprint in West Asia. In 2016, Saudi Arabia awarded India's Prime Minister its highest civilian honour. In 2021, the I2U2 agreement was signed binding India, Israel, the United States and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) together. In 2024, Iran leased Chabahar to India. All these successes though are now memories from the past.

Pakistan's new diplomatic moment

In the last four months, the U.S.-Israel war with Iran has escalated into a catastrophic regional conflict with Iran attacking the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the Saudis hitting Iraqi militias, Houthis attacking Saudi ships and Israel carrying out strikes in multiple countries. Now, the Gulf countries are rethinking the efficacy of the U.S. security umbrella. They see a threat from both Iran and Israel.

Among the Gulf countries there is a schism on how to handle this threat – through engagement (as the UAE is doing) or through deterrence (as the Saudis are contemplating).

In this context, Pakistan's role as mediator in the U.S.-Iran conflict is gaining it reputational benefits in the region. Irrespective of Pakistan's motives, analysts in the region see that Pakistan waded into the conflict at a time when it seemed that no one could bring U.S. President Donald Trump and the Iranians to the table despite efforts by Türkiye, Qatar and Egypt.

The latest collective defence pact in Mecca between Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan comes in this context. This pact may mean less in shaping the U.S.-Iran war as none of these countries is likely to directly take on Iran alongside the U.S. The pact is thus aimed less at Iran and more at deterring Israel. All three countries see themselves as the next target of Israel after Iran. They thus want to pool Saudi capital, Pakistan's military strength, and Türkiye's technological advances.

> West Asia is changing rapidly and India must act before its influence fades

This is a challenge for India. A future war between Israel and Pakistan will inevitably draw in India given the close partnership between Israel and India. Similarly, even greater Turkish support for Pakistan in a future conflict that Pakistan might have with India cannot be ruled out

The choices before India

What then is India's strategy? It appears to be confident of Israel's victory in its various battles in the region given its proximity to the U.S. But U.S. politics are changing rapidly, with both 'Make America Great Again' Republicans and Democratic Socialists questioning the once-unquestioned U.S. support for Israel. Can Israel then emerge triumphant alone?

India has cultivated a special relationship with the UAE given the importance of remittances from Indian expat workers in the country, the investments by the Indian elite in the UAE and the UAE's strategic investments in India. But the UAE's mounting differences with Saudi Arabia are a cause for concern, as are its positions against UN-recognised governments in conflicts as afar as Sudan. Can the UAE emerge unscathed in all these conflicts?

India can choose to sign military alliances with Israel and the UAE. But this would hurt what is left of India's relationship with Iran and Saudi Arabia. India can choose to do nothing as it is doing now. And its merchant mariners may keep getting killed in the Strait of Hormuz while more Indian ships may sink in the Bab-el-Mandeb.

A great power in the making risks appearing humbled and hobbled in its immediate maritime neighbourhood.

Or, India can pick a third way. It can devise an active regional political strategy. Re-engage the Saudis with whom it has no explicit differences.

It can start playing a role of rebuilding trust between the Arab countries and Iran, starting with the UAE-Iran relationship. It can engage in Jordan's security offering Jordan defensive technologies at a time when U.S. munitions are running low. It can engage in the future UN peacekeeping role in Lebanon, which is now under a cloud, with the forecast being an end to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). It can even run a back-channel with Türkiye sharing its red lines about its relationship with Pakistan. If India cannot join the new Saudi-led maritime force for the Red Sea, it can work with Egypt on a parallel effort to safeguard India-bound shipping, from the Suez Canal to Bab-el-Mandeb. It can look into setting up a military presence in the Red Sea region whether in Somaliland or Socotra. Building on current military training exchanges, it can start drills and military exercises with a range of countries in the region.

Think of bridge-building

India can also appoint a new Special Envoy for West Asia – not one focused on the Israel-Palestine peace process necessarily, but one who can draw all the threads together to secure India's interests in the region at a time of unprecedented turbulence. All of this can be part of one pro-active vision for India to support a new security architecture for West Asia – one that does not draw new battle lines but instead contributes to trust-building.

India cannot afford to be a stranger to West Asia. India has both the capacity and the responsibility to help restore peace and predictability in the region.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Political labelling

The Prime Minister often creates new terms and expressions to disparage opponents and dissenters. After previous labels such as 'urban Naxals', '*tukde-tukde* gang' and '*andolanjeevis*' became outdated, he has used the national platform to introduce a new one: '*dimagi* (intellectual) naxals'. This seems aimed at the student leaders behind the Gen Z protests, which have somewhat damaged his strongman image. If his warning about a 'malicious plan to harm the country' was genuine, he should have clearly outlined the traits of such individuals. This vague label is another excuse for his government to target inconvenient voices and regain lost ground (Page 1, August 16).

Kamal Laddha,
Bengaluru

True patriotism

The controversy over the rendition of the full version of *Vande Mataram* at the headquarters of the Congress party (August 16) has emerged amid the government's emphasis on its complete rendition. Patriotism should extend beyond symbolic expressions of attachment to the nation to include a tangible commitment to the safety, dignity and well-being of its people. Mindless violence against individuals suspected of transporting beef, or attacks on Christians at peaceful prayer meetings, are equally incompatible with the values of patriotism and constitutional democracy. The democratic ideal is not the dominance of the majority over minorities, but a constitutional framework in which every citizen can participate with equal dignity and security.

Matthew Adukanil,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

How AI can be optimised for better healthcare

Suneeta Reddy

Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd.

Modern medicine has built an extraordinary depth of knowledge. However, how much of that knowledge can reach the patient who needs it now? The answer has traditionally depended on the number and distribution of trained clinicians, the institutions in which they work, and the systems that connect them to patients. All three are difficult to expand quickly. For India, which is still expanding its healthcare capacity while its disease burden becomes more complex, the question of how far health expertise can reach is particularly consequential.

Here, Artificial Intelligence (AI) introduces a new dimension. It offers a way of taking the accumulated knowledge and making more of it available at the point of care. The change is visible across major health systems. In January 2025, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said it had authorised more than 1,000 AI-enabled medical devices. These include tools used in radiology, cardiology, and other areas of diagnosis. In the U.K., the NHS issued a guidance in April 2025 for the use of AI-enabled ambient scribing. By January 2026, the country was developing a national programme to support wider adoption, with early evidence suggesting that the technology could give doctors up to a quarter more time with their patients.

These examples point to a wider change. AI is moving out of innovation teams and into consultations, diagnostic workflows, and hospital operations. The real work now lies in making it dependable enough for routine use.

The economic benefits

India has its own set of challenges. Specialist care remains concentrated in larger cities, while chronic conditions require patients to be monitored over many years. Hospitals are also managing rising volumes without being able to increase clinical capacity at the same pace.

An AI tool that helps prioritise a radiology scan, alerts a care team to a deteriorating patient or supports a physician handling a complex case in a smaller city can make existing capacity work more efficiently.

The country has already built much of the digital foundation required for this shift. By May 2026, more than 100 crore health records had been linked to the Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts, twice the number recorded in February 2025. A July 2026 government update reported that the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) Scan and Share service had reduced outpatient registration waits at participating hospitals from around an hour to between two and five minutes. These improvements did not require a dramatic reinvention. It came from removing friction from a familiar hospital process. AI can extend the same principle to appointment scheduling, clinical documentation, claims, inventory planning, and discharge management. Each task takes time away from care if handled poorly.

Additionally, the financial benefits from using AI is becoming harder for healthcare providers to ignore. A January 2026 McKinsey analysis estimated that applying AI across healthcare revenue-cycle operations could reduce the cost to collect by 30% to 60%. For hospitals, these gains can free resources for clinical teams, equipment and capacity. They can also reduce administrative work that contributes to staff fatigue.

> A January 2026 McKinsey analysis estimated that applying AI across healthcare revenue-cycle operations could reduce the cost to collect by 30% to 60%

There is yet another part related to the business side that receives less attention. AI can help providers offer services that were previously difficult to deliver at scale. Remote monitoring can extend care beyond discharge. Risk-based preventive programmes can identify people who need attention before symptoms become severe. Virtual specialist support can connect smaller hospitals with expertise located elsewhere. Diagnostics can be taken closer to communities, while hospitals maintain an ongoing relationship with patients managing diabetes, cardiac disease or cancer.

Judicious use

These models create revenue, but their value does not come from selling more technology. It comes from reaching patients earlier and avoiding preventable deterioration. This is also where restraint matters. A system that performs well in one hospital or population may not work equally well across India's States, disease patterns, and care settings. Clinical validation, representative data, and human oversight also need to be seriously considered. The FDA's September 2025 call for better methods to evaluate AI-enabled devices in real-world settings reflects a concern that every health system will have to confront. The tools' performance at launch does not guarantee performance over time.

Healthcare does not need AI everywhere. It needs it where delays can be reduced, clinicians can make better-informed decisions, and more patients can receive appropriate care. As India marks another year of Independence, there is a larger dimension to this conversation. The economic strength of a nation ultimately rests on the capabilities of its people. Healthcare therefore belongs within the architecture of economic development. India has built considerable physical and digital infrastructure over the decades; the next phase of development will depend increasingly on the health, longevity and productivity of its population. AI can contribute by making expertise widely available and by shifting healthcare towards earlier detection and continuous management.

The economic return on AI in healthcare will be measured not by the number of systems deployed, but by the number of lives touched and its impact on human life and happiness.

Andhra's urban transformation

The State's municipal department is trying to build a sustainable urban model

STATE OF PLAY

V. Raghavendra

The Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) Department of Andhra Pradesh is caught in the time warp of archaic administrative measures. But now it seems the light has dawned as it tries to catch up with the times.

A top official of the department, at the recent Green Andhra Summit organised by the Indian Green Building Council, noted in disbelief that one of the most laughable things about urban local bodies was its imposition of a 'tree guard fee'. The audience went into a fit of giggles as the official continued to say that about 45 different types of charges are being collected by the MA&UD Department. He stated that he has since sought to make systemic changes with a new sense of urgency in order to achieve sustainable development.

An overhaul

The government is streamlining a whole lot of procedures and doing away with redundant ones in keeping with the Swarna Andhra 2047 Vision.

A significant step towards transforming cities and towns into cleaner urban agglomerations is a mandate to apartment complexes, if the waste generated per day exceeds 100 kilos, to set up their own in-situ solid waste management units. This has not yet been made formally mandatory, but it is a welcome move as the government intends to rid cities and towns of waste.

To complement this move, the department contemplated giving incentives for using treated wastewater, like it is done in some advanced countries across industrial, commercial, and drinking purposes. The Reuse of Treated Used Water Policy, 2026 has been approved by the government to boost long-term water security, reduce freshwater dependence, and promote a circular water economy.

Additionally, the existing model of developing slums is being reworked to achieve the twin objectives of improving the quality of life for the slum dwellers and making cities look beautiful. Towards this, the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation is embarking on the redevelopment of a slum on the DBFT (Design, Build, Finance and Transfer) basis under the Visakhapatnam Economic Region Program through suitable amendments to the Andhra Pradesh Building Rules of 2017. It involves the construction of a high-rise building which should accommodate 177 housing units. This is a first-of-its-kind project taken up anywhere in the State as a result of the slew of relaxations made in the Floor Space Index (FSI) norms in order to make projects viable for developers in small slum areas.

A green economy

The MA&UD Department has also laid greater thrust on green buildings by encouraging the use of green materials at the design stage itself as well as for necessary modifications in existing buildings; various incentives are also being planned to accelerate this adoption such as giving discounts in development charges, irrespective of the types of use (residential or commercial). The focus on green buildings is in tune with the growing need to reduce the carbon footprint of the construction sector, and in the process facilitate the unobstructed transmission of natural light and free flow of air, which makes the buildings energy-efficient and thereby economically viable.

Keeping in view the multiple benefits of green buildings, the government is extending the initiative to ordinary houses, schools, hospitals, and commercial establishments like never before. It has also stipulated hefty penalties in case of violations.

These things apart, the government has prioritised the optimisation of land use (utilising vacant private land for public spaces) and transit-oriented development to incentivise transit corridors and stops. The MA&UD has already eased the zoning regulations and reduced the number of zones from 15 to 10 for the sake of flexibility in urban development.

The whole idea, as per the MA&UD official, is to make the city grow rapidly and be adaptive, like it happened with London and Paris among other great global cities.

A decisive shift is thus underway towards deep-tech governance, fiscal self-reliance, and environmentally resilient urban living, keeping in line with the theme 'build faster and better and grow green'. This can already be seen in Amaravati, the emerging greenfield capital city of Andhra Pradesh.

raghavendra.v@thehindu.co.in

Girls conditioned from childhood to take up domestic burden

The time women spend on housework begins to rise around the age of 10 and reaches a peak of nearly 460 minutes a day around age 30

DATA POINT

Tanu M. Goyal
Mohd. Tahoor
Shravani Prakash

In a recent interaction with women aspiring to become entrepreneurs in rural Haryana, it was found that other than social and cultural norms, the biggest practical problem constraining the women's' ability to do more paid work was that a large share of their time was tied up in cooking and completing household chores. Strikingly, their daughters, rather than their sons, were already sharing this burden by helping them in the kitchen and other chores. The next generation, it seemed, is already learning to reproduce the gender gap in invisible, unpaid work.

India's Time Use Survey (2025) highlights that the division of labour that emerges in adulthood begins much earlier, through childhood conditioning. What starts in childhood widens with age, reaching its peak in the prime working years **(Chart 1)**.

The time women spend on housework begins to rise around the age of 10 and continues through the late teens and twenties, reaching a peak of nearly 460 minutes (7.5 hours +) a day around age 30. The male curve, however, never crosses 65 minutes at any age between six and 75. Adolescence, in this sense, is not separate from adulthood; it is when the adult pattern begins to take shape **(Chart 1)**. Data shows that at age six, Indian boys and girls spend almost the same amount of time on domestic and care work at about five minutes a day **(Chart 2)**. Their trajectories remain relatively close through early childhood. Thereafter, however, they diverge sharply.

Around age 10, the girls' curve begins to pull away. Girls spend about 15 minutes a day on domestic and care work at age 10, 75 minutes at 15, and around 130 minutes by age 17. Boys, meanwhile, move from roughly five minutes at age six to only about 17 minutes by the end of childhood. The result is a dramatic widening of the gender gap. The girl-to-boy ratio in unpaid work rises from 1.6 among children aged 6-9, to 4.5 among those aged 10-14, and to 7.5 among adolescents aged 15-17.

Little control over time

The cost is leisure. Between ages six and 17, girls' housework rises by roughly 124 minutes a day, while their leisure time falls by around 115 minutes. For boys, the decline in leisure is much smaller but the time they spend on housework changes relatively little.

This matters because the cost of girls' domestic work is often framed primarily as a trade-off with schooling and education. But data shows that girls, in fact, are spending slightly more time on learning than boys at most ages. They, therefore, remain in school but still pay a substantial price in leisure time that could be spent on sport, friendships, rest, exploration and simply having discretionary control over their own time. These are not economically irrelevant activities. They are part of how children build confidence, social networks, physical capability and even a sense of agency, all of which influence their ability to build career trajectories later in life **(Chart 2)**.

Cooking lies at the centre of this divergence **(Chart 3)**. Among adolescents aged 15-17 years, 42.4% of girls report cooking, compared with only 2.9% of boys. Girls in this age group spend close to an hour cooking, while boys spend just two minutes. Cleaning and laundry also become increasingly gendered, with wide gaps in both participation and time spent. The only tasks where adolescent boys match or exceed girls are farm work and shopping; activities that are more outward-facing (the field and market), rather than inward-facing into the kitchen.

Between childhood and adulthood, therefore, girls are being trained for the household while boys are being trained for the world outside. This helps explain why childhood conditioning can later appear as an "efficient" gendered allocation of household work.

One of the clearest manifestations of these gendered expectations is women's absence from the labour force. In the 2025 PLFS, childcare and domestic responsibilities were the single most-cited reason women gave for staying out of the labour force, reported by 52.5% of urban women and 40% of rural women, compared with less than 1% of men.

Most policy interventions address women's unpaid work in adulthood through childcare, community kitchens, safe mobility infrastructure, flexible work and social protection, among others. But the Time Use Survey suggests that policy must also start much earlier, by addressing the unequal assignment of domestic work between boys and girls.

The objective is not to remove domestic work from children's lives, but to remove its gender assignment. Schools can help by giving every child, boy or girl, equal opportunities to learn practical life skills, from cooking and home management to stitching, carpentry and financial management.

India has invested heavily in keeping girls in school and improving their educational outcomes, but equal attention must be paid to what happens to their time outside school. Otherwise, by the time young women enter the labour market, years of gendered conditioning and unpaid work may already have narrowed their choices. If we want a different workforce tomorrow, we may need to start by giving boys and girls a different childhood today.

Authors work at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER). Views expressed are personal

Disproportionate burden

The data for the charts were sourced from India's Time Use Survey (2025) and the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI)

CHART 1 : Time spent on housework (unpaid domestic and caregiving services)

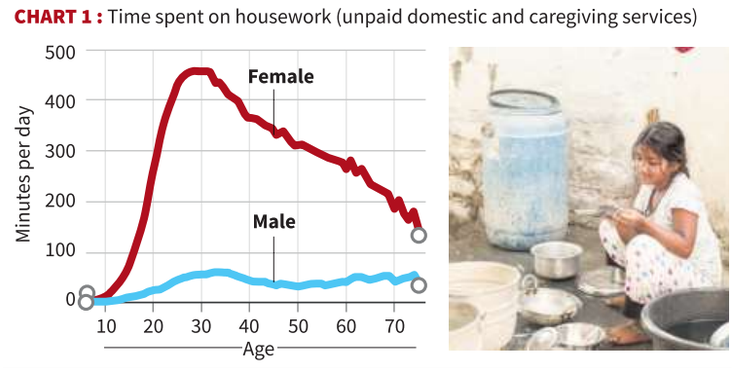


CHART 2 : Time spent by children on domestic work, leisure and learning

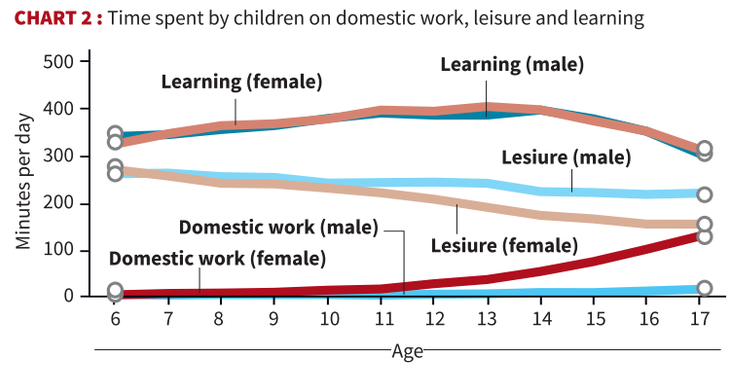
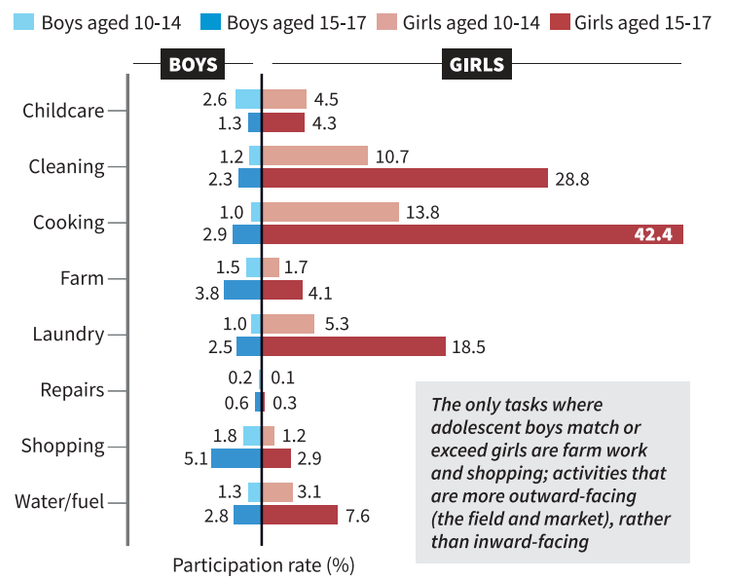


CHART 3 : The share (participation rate) of girls and boys who engage in different types of housework



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 17, 1976

Water supplies dry up in U.K.

London, August 16: The possibility that Britain, an island normally drenched by Atlantic rains, may have to import drinking water is now being seriously studied by planners, according to informed sources.

With no sign of a let-up in the country's worst drought since 1727 when records started officials recognise that such drastic action as importing water by ship from Scandinavia and distributing it by tanker lorries may become necessary.

Water supplies are rapidly drying up and a million homes in South Wales already have water cut off at night. From next month, people in parts of Western England will have to queue at Stand-pipes for supplies.

Strict rationing starts in the Channel Island of Jersey to-day and has been in force in neighbouring Guernsey island since a state of emergency was declared in June. Without such measures water would run out in six weeks.

After revelling an untypically dry and glorious summer, Britons are now waking up to the prospect that if the rains stay away through the autumn they could be in for a winter of hardship with food and industrial production hit.

All 10 water authorities in England and Wales have promptly told the Government that they will be applying to use powers made available under the Drought Act. Three authorities covering North-East, South, West and the whole of Wales are demanding the right to cut off water to homes whenever they wish.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 17, 1926

Manchester cotton trade

London, August 16: The Federation of Master Cotton Spinners Association has inaugurated a scheme for the protection of American Spinning Section of the trade from undercost selling. "Basic prices" which are in effect minimum prices, are fixed for a standard quality of American cotton and beams. Salesmen of the Manchester Exchange representing firms producing these yarns have been instructed to quote prices coinciding with the Federation's list. The elimination of cheap sellers seems only a matter of time if the Federation members stand together. The Federation and Non-Federation concerns have promised loyal support.

From Page One

Dhaka sets 'conditions' for PM Rahman's visit

The Bangladeshi spokesperson confirmed the consultation and said, "Officials of Bangladesh and India have been in touch with each other for several weeks on the possibility of a bilateral visit by Honourable Prime Minister Mr. Tarique Rahman to India. However, this process was vitiated by the open press interaction in New Delhi on August 5 by Sheikh Hasina...".

Earlier, on August 7, Mr. Jaiswal had distanced India from Ms. Hasina's press conference saying that India does not "endorse" the comments made against the "duly constituted government" of Bangladesh.

In Sunday's remarks, Mr. Karim reiterated Dhaka's "Bangladesh first" foreign policy and said the government will continue to "promote friendly bilateral relations with other countries" including with neighbours, "on the basis of sovereign equality, national dignity, non-interference in each other's internal affairs and mutual benefit". Ms. Hasina sought refuge in India on August 5, 2024, after a popular uprising toppled her government.

NTA orders re-test for 3 UGC-NET papers

"The committee found that the three papers had many factual, typographical, and translation errors, including misspelt names of prominent scholars, garbled book titles, errors in the stem wording of questions, grammatical errors, gender and number agreement errors, punctuation mistakes, and non-standard coined terms for established concepts, as well as repetition of a significant number of questions previously administered," he added.

In a notice, the NTA said that the "papers carrying such defects do not meet the standards of fairness and error-free examination."

"Further details of city, centre, and admit card will be notified separately on the official website. No additional examination fee will be charged from the candidates of these three subjects for the re-conduct," the NTA said.

Jharkhand govt. invites protesters for talks

Beyond Ranchi, effigies were also burnt in other districts, with students shouting slogans against the JMM-led government and against the Congress, which had reportedly promised to withdraw support to the State government if it did not address their demands by Independence Day.

'Congress fails to keep promises'

Hundreds of students have gathered at the stadium in the State capital since July 25, demanding a CBI inquiry into alleged irregularities in the government job recruitment exams

Ravindra Paswan, the leader of the JPSC-JSSC Reform Manch, said that when the students' agitation began, Mr. Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, had assured them that if Mr. Soren did not take any positive steps regarding their demands or provide a satisfactory response by August 15, the Congress would withdraw its support to the JMM-led government. However, even after August 15, the government has not taken any concrete steps to address their demands, Mr. Paswan said. "We have already announced that if the government does not listen to our demands by August 18, we will gherao the CM's residence on August 20. We have no other option left," he said.

Kumar Rajat, the Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) of Ranchi Sadar, and Dhananjay Kumar, Additional District Magistrate (ADM), Law and Order met the protesting students at the site in the evening with the government's proposals. Mr. Rajat told *The Hindu* that students have been invited by the government to hold talks between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Monday, at the State guest house in Ranchi.

Armed forces to provide list of retiring Agniveers

Over the past month, CAPFs such as the CRPF, the SSB, and Assam Rifles have issued notifications, specifying 50% reservation for the ex-Agniveers. As reported by *The Hindu*, the Border Security Force (BSF) was the first to issue such a notification on December 19, 2025, enhancing the quota from 10% to 50%.

The ex-Agniveers will be exempted from written examinations, physical standard tests, and physical efficiency tests, the notifications said. Recruitment to the post of Constable (General Duty) will be carried out through direct recruitment, with 50% of vacancies reserved for ex-Agniveers, the CRPF's notification, issued on July 27 said.

"In the first phase, the concerned nodal force will conduct recruitment to fill the vacancies earmarked for ex-Agniveers, or in accordance with instructions issued by the MHA from time to time. In the second phase, recruitment for the remaining 50% of vacancies will be conducted through an open examination under the existing recruitment provisions. Any vacancies reserved for ex-Agniveers that remain unfilled in the first phase will be added to the vacancies to be filled in the second phase," the CRPF said.

'No private data sought for Census; ID details will be collected only if available'

J&K, Ladakh Census chief says data is confidential under Census Act; he asks people to write down answers beforehand as number of questions has increased; warns people to be aware of cyberfraud, encourages self-enumeration; Phase 2 of Census begins in snow-bound areas from today

INTERVIEW

Amit Sharma

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) on August 14 notified 40 questions for Population Enumeration, the second phase of the Census 2027, which will begin in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand from Monday and continue till September 30, ahead of the rest of the country, where the exercise will be held in February 2027.

The Census 2027 questionnaire will include 13 new questions that were not part of the Census 2011 questionnaire, which had 29 questions. The new questions seek information on the spouse's name, nationality, father and mother's particulars, digital literacy, permanent address, place of COVID-19 vaccination, number of bank accounts, passport, driving licence and mobile, Aadhaar and voter ID numbers, if available.

Amit Sharma, Chief Principal Census Officer and Director, Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, speaks to *The Hindu* about the Census 2027 exercise and its significance for the two Union Territories.

Other than caste enumeration, the Population Census 2027 will also enumerate new data fields such as place of COVID-19 vaccination, identity documents and particulars of parents. What is the rationale behind the inclusion of such questions?

The questions are decided after several rounds of discussions with all Ministries. No private or confidential data is being sought by enumerators; these are all documents provided by the government. We are not seeking the bank account details, only the number of accounts an individual has.

The identity documents such as Aadhaar, voter ID, driving licence, and passport are all issued by the government, and respondents are to provide them, subject to availability.

All data is confidential under the Census Act, 1948. It is better if respondents write down their details on paper before an enumerator comes. Since there are 40 questions, it may take more time.

How will self-enumeration work in J&K and Ladakh?

Self-enumeration in the entire Union Territory of Ladakh and in the snow-bound areas of 16 districts of J&K will begin on Monday on the web portal before door-to-door enumeration begins on September 1. We would encourage people to self-enumerate. Beware of cyber fraud; fraudsters may seek information in the name of the Census. Our enumerators have QR-code-enabled ID cards; their credentials can be checked.

The self-enumeration option will be georeferenced and available only in the snow-bound areas. So, even if a resident of a snow-bound area of a district in J&K, say Gurez, who is presently in the plains, will not be able to access the portal.

Under the extended de facto pattern, everyone present at a location will be counted. More than 6.67 lakh households in J&K and 7,009 households in Ladakh voluntarily completed self-enumeration before the House Listing Operations (HLO), the first phase, in June.

Why is Census 2027 significant for J&K and Ladakh?

It will provide the first comprehensive demographic picture of Jammu & Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 and the first Census of Ladakh as a Union Territory. Beyond updating population figures after over a decade, it will generate data on population distribution, migration, age structure, housing, education, employment, fertility, disability and social composition to support planning and resource allocation.

Why is geography a key focus?

Demographic realities vary sharply across urban centres, border districts, remote mountain villages and tribal areas. Census 2027 aims to capture not just population numbers, but where people live, how they live, how they move and how those patterns are changing.

What are the main enumeration challenges in J&K and Ladakh?

J&K's population is spread across cities, villages, mountainous regions, border areas and tribal habitations. Seasonal migration further complicates enumeration.

Ladakh's population lives across a vast high-altitude region marked by dispersed settlements, difficult connectivity, seasonal accessibility and remote locations. The Census must accurately capture where people live and how the population distribution varies.

How will nomadic communities and displaced populations be counted?

Special coordination with departments dealing with forests, tribal affairs and local administration will help identify migratory routes and seasonal settlements of Gujjar-Bakarwals and other nomadic groups. The objective is to ensure that mobility does not lead to undercounting.

Communities such as Kashmiri Pandits will be recorded according to established Census concepts and reference dates, while capturing migration and household characteristics.

For the full interview: newsth.live/amitsharma

Three arrested after Bengal CJP activist's father dies in attack

Senjuti Sengupta
KOLKATA

Three persons were arrested on Sunday after the father of a Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) volunteer died on Saturday of injuries suffered in an attack on Thursday in West Bengal's Bankura.

The CJP has claimed that local Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers attacked Janab Mafik, father of Shaik Abdul Hafeez, the CJP volunteer.

However, West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari dismissed the allegation and said a first information report (FIR) was lodged against five persons, three of whom were arrested.

"Of the five persons against whom an FIR has been registered, three have already been arrested. The two others will also be arrested. There is no BJP connection here. They are all criminals," Mr. Adhikari told presspersons.

Officials said the incident took place at Bankura's Karisunda on Thursday after Mr. Hafeez went to 'inspect' a government school as part of the CJP's '*School Thik Karo*' campaign. Mr. Hafeez had attended the CJP's protest last month at Delhi's Jantar Mantar demanding the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan as Education Minister.

"At night, five BJP workers attacked my house. They were looking for me but launched a brutal attack on my father after they could not find me. He sustained grievous injuries and was rushed to the Bardhaman Medical College, where he passed away," Mr. Hafeez told presspersons.

Dipke condoles death

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke issued a statement condoling the death.

"CJP stands firmly with Abdul and his family. We demand the immediate arrest of those responsible for his father's death. And to the hatemongers who think they can silence us through violence: we are not going to back off. Attack our members, threaten us, try to intimidate us, we will only fight harder," he posted on X.

Former Bengal Minister found dead at Trinamool party office in Birbhum

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Former West Bengal Minister and Trinamool Congress leader Asish Banerjee was found dead on Sunday morning inside a party office near his residence in Birbhum district.

The 75-year-old leader was a five-term Trinamool MLA and Deputy Speaker of the West Bengal Assembly from 2021 to 2026. He lost the 2026 Assembly election to the BJP's Dhruba Saha.

A note was found and the body was sent for autopsy. Banerjee, who had taught at Rampurhat College, was known as a leader with a clean image. The note stated that he was not involved in any "wrongdoing".

"I had nothing to do with corruption and yet all these completely false allegations to malign me..." the note read. Banerjee rued that he became associated with politics and urged his children not to do so.

In the note, the Trinamool leader was apparently referring to supposed allegations of wrongdoings related to the Tarapith Rampurhat Development Authority where he had served as the chairperson.

Asish Banerjee

Leaders across political lines expressed grief over the demise of the leader.

Blame game

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari described Banerjee as a decent political leader and said that he spoke to the family members of the deceased leader and asked them to cooperate with the police. "Corrupt individuals from the Trinamool might try to intimidate them... Call records should be examined," he said.

Former Chief Minister and Trinamool chairperson Mamata Banerjee said she felt deeply disturbed over his demise.

In a social media post, she said that "despite the work he did, he was repeatedly maligned, falsely accused and subjected to relentless pressure". The Trinamool supremo, while referring to the harassment and mental pressure faced by Banerjee, said that it "should make all of us pause and reflect on the human cost of relentless political hostility".

Banerjee had joined the camp of rebel Trinamool MLAs led by Leader of the Opposition Ritabrata Banerjee. He visited the residence of the deceased leader and called him a "martyr". "He stood against the mafia syndicate of the organised loot and legalised plunder, and they should be identified and punished," Mr. Ritabrata said.

(For those in distress, counselling is available at TeleMANAS-14416)

West Bengal Congress leader and son killed

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Congress leader Anishur Rahman and his son Abu Sufiyan were killed in West Bengal's Nadia district late on the night of August 14. Miscreants fired upon the vehicle in which the father and son were travelling at the Nakasipara railway gate. The duo were dragged out of the vehicle and hacked to death.

Three persons were arrested in connection with the murder on Sunday morning. Among the arrested is Fatema Bibi, head of Nadia's Haranagar panchayat. Two of Ms. Fatema's associates, Ali Mandal and Mithun Sheikh, have also been arrested.

The Congress observed a 'Black Day' across the State on Sunday.

Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari said activists of the Trinamool Congress were behind the murder. "The SP told me that Jubbar Sheikh got it done from the jail. Jubbar Sheikh's wife, who is the Trinamool panchayat head, has also been arrested," Mr. Adhikari said.

Three held in Bengal over suspected Pakistan links

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The Special Task Force (STF) of the West Bengal Police on Saturday arrested three people from Sahebganj in Cooch Behar for suspected association with the Pakistan-based intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

The accused were identified as Rashidul and Nasiruddin from Sahebganj, and Safikul from Bihar.

Claims of violations in faculty recruitment 'malicious': JNU V-C

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid calls for her resignation over allegations of irregularities in the recruitment of teachers at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Vice-Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit on Sunday called the allegations a "malicious campaign" run by JNU Students Union (JNUSU) and JNU Teachers' Association (JNUTA).

"Sections of the media have been running a fake malicious campaign through false, distorted, selective, or unsubstantiated narratives against me. Despite the most transparent, record recruitments, especially of the SC/ST and the OBC, in the University in the last four and a half years of my term as V-C, I have been made the target of a vicious campaign by the JNUSU and JNUTA....," Ms. Pandit said.

Farmers' march to Delhi stopped at Haryana-Punjab boundary

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

A group of around 200 farmers and supporters led by Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal was stopped by the Haryana Police at the Khanauri-Data Singhwala boundary in Jind on Sunday while marching on foot towards Delhi as part of a 13-day '*Kisan Bachao Padyatra*' (Save Farmers Walk).

Several farmer leaders were also taken into preventive detention. The group was heading towards Delhi's Jantar Mantar to press for a range of demands, including exclusion of agriculture from the proposed India-U.S. trade agreement; a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP); waiver of farmers' loans; and withdrawal of police cases registered against farmers during agitations.

The farmers were scheduled to reach Jantar Mantar on August 29. The farmers were marching peacefully on foot and had not brought tractors or trolleys, Mr. Dallewal told *The Hindu*. The government had earlier said that the farmers would be allowed to proceed if they came on foot, he added.

The Haryana Police, in anticipation of the march, had sealed the stretch between the Khanauri boundary in Punjab and the Data Singhwala in Haryana with concrete barriers and barbed wire. Heavy security was deployed around the Narwana canal bridge.

SIR helped Bihar achieve record poll turnout: CEC

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar on Sunday said that the 'successful' conduct of Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Bihar last year helped to increase the voter turnout in the State Assembly election that followed.

Mr. Kumar landed in Patna on Sunday for a two-day visit to Bihar. Thanking the voters of Bihar, at a press conference at the airport, the CEC said he had come to pay his respects to the sacred land of Bihar.

He asserted that SIR was the most successful nationwide initiative for the purification of electoral rolls and it originated in Bihar. The voter turnout during the last Assembly election was the highest recorded since Independence.

The CEC said the SIR exercise resulted in around 70 lakh names being removed from the electoral rolls. "The revision was followed by the Assembly elections, which recorded a significant rise in voter turnout," he said.

Mr. Kumar is scheduled to visit Vaishali, Madhubani and Sitamarhi. On Monday, he will interact with around 500 Booth Level Officers in Rajgir.

Shah seeks Congress apology over *Vande Mataram* row

Union Home Minister, Bengal CM accuse the Opposition party of 'disrespecting' the National Song; Bankim Chandra's descendant writes letter to Sonia Gandhi; Congress denies any wrongdoing

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR/KOLKATA

Escalating the controversy over the National Song's rendition at the Congress headquarters on Independence Day, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday demanded an apology from the Opposition party for "disrespecting" *Vande Mataram*.

Mr. Shah accused Congress leader Sonia Gandhi of asking for the National Song to be stopped midway during the Independence Day event. The Congress has denied the charge, asserting that there was no attempt to stop the singing of the full, six-stanza version of the song. The party said Ms. Gandhi was only asking for a chair for Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, who was standing for quite some time.

Addressing a public meeting at Nimbahera in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh district, Mr. Shah said, "The people of the country will never forgive this sin you have committed. If Congress members have any shame left, they should fold their hands and apologise to the people," Mr. Shah said.

Amit Shah waves the Tiranga at a public meet in Alwar, Rajasthan, on Sunday. Union Minister Bhupender Yadav is also seen. PTI

"Thousands of people went to the gallows, faced bullets, endured lathi charge and were jailed while chanting *Vande Mataram*. But the Congress has forgotten it for a vote bank," he said.

'Sacred symbol'

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Sumitra Chatterjee – a descendant of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, who wrote the lyrics of the song 150 years ago – demanded an apology from Ms. Gandhi.

Mr. Chatterjee, who represents the Naihati constituency in the West Bengal Assembly, shot off a letter to Ms. Gandhi dated August 15, saying that *Vande Mataram* was "not the ancestral property" of any single political party. "It is part of the nation's collective memory, the eternal legacy of Bankim Chandra, and a sacred national symbol earned through the blood and sacrifice of millions of martyrs," he wrote.

"As a descendant of Rishi Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's family, I urge you - in humble yet firm terms - to engage in introspection and offer an unconditional apology," Mr. Chatterjee added.

Mr. Adhikari also criticised Ms. Gandhi, claiming that her "objection" to singing the full version of *Vande Mataram* was an "insult" to the song writer's nationalism. "I condemn Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi's objection to *Vande Mataram*. This is an insult to nationalism, patriotism and to the creator of *Vande Mataram*," Mr. Adhikari said at the State Secretariat in Kolkata.

Complaint lodged with Delhi Police

NEW DELHI

An inquiry has been initiated after two lawyers asked the Delhi Police to register a first information report (FIR) against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi under the provisions of a new law seeking to punish insults to the National Song. The complaint filed at the Indraprastha Estate Police Station here sought probe into the "intentional obstruction" caused during the rendition of the song at AICC headquarters.

Home Minister is trying to divert attention from more pressing issues: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday strongly rebutted Union Home Minister Amit Shah's charge that the party had insulted the National Song *Vande Mataram*, asserting that it has always respected the song and accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of trying to manufacture a political controversy.

The fresh exchange came a day after a row erupted during Independence Day celebrations at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters in New Delhi on Saturday, where Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi was seen gesturing towards party president Mallikarjun Kharge while *Vande Mataram* was being sung.

Addressing a public gathering in Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, Mr. Shah accused the Congress of disrespecting the National Song and demanded an apology from the party. Referring to a footage from the Independence Day function, he alleged that Ms. Gandhi had asked the Congress president to stop the song midway.

"We all saw it on television," Mr. Shah said, adding that Ms. Gandhi should apologise to the people of the country.

> A man who insulted Dr. Ambedkar in Rajya Sabha. A man who belongs to an ideology that did not see fit to unfurl the Tiranga at its headquarters till 2002. A man who orchestrated the Delhi Police's brutalities on peacefully protesting youth. Such a man is now demanding an apology from the Congress to divert attention away from the real issues of the day
>
> **JAIRAM RAMESH**
> Congress general secretary

Responding to the charge, Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal dismissed the allegation and maintained that the party's commitment to *Vande Mataram* was beyond doubt.

Speaking to presspersons in Kollam, Kerala, Mr. Venugopal said the controversy had arisen out of a misunderstanding. "For the BJP, everything is political. For us, it is emotional. What happened at the AICC headquarters was a communication issue. We are people who respect *Vande Mataram*. The Congress has a clear stand on *Vande Mataram*, and you will understand it in due course," he said.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh also launched a sharp attack on the Home Minister, accusing him of attempting to divert attention from more pressing issues.

In a post on social media platform X, Mr. Ramesh said: "A man who insulted Dr. Ambedkar on the floor of the Rajya Sabha on December 17, 2024. A man who belongs to an ideology that did not see fit to unfurl the Tiranga at its headquarters till January 2002. A man who orchestrated the Delhi Police's brutalities on peacefully protesting youth. Such a man is now demanding an apology from the Congress to divert attention away from the real issues of the day and away from the colossal failures of his and his Sahib's."

Congress steps up student outreach campaign on exams and joblessness

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

In 2014, the Bihar Staff Selection Commission notified vacancies for various positions, including forest guards, assistant sub-inspectors, lower division clerks and stenographers. The examination was conducted in 2018, and the results were declared only in 2022, eight years after the posts were first advertised.

Rakesh Chandan (name changed), 32, from Patna, was among those who took the examination. By the time the results were announced, he said, many successful candidates had become ineligible to join because they had crossed the age limit prescribed for recruitment.

In 2012, Prashant Pandey (name changed), 37, from a small town near Dehradun in Uttarakhand, cleared the written examination for the post of sub-inspector in the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. He was found to be 2kg short of the required weight and was asked to undergo another medical examination. Three months later, he was informed that the recruitment process had been indefinitely postponed.

All ears: Rahul Gandhi listening to grievances from students during a public meeting in Prayagraj. ANI

The common thread linking these two stories, separated by more than 1,000 km, is the Congress party and its efforts to mobilise the growing frustration among students and job aspirants. Since June, the party has been reaching out to aspirants preparing for public recruitment and educational examinations, including NEET, as part of its "*Chhatron Ki Goonj*" initiative.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has addressed three public meetings in Kota, Dehradun and Prayagraj. On Sunday, he announced another event in Pune on August 22 that will focus exclusively on women aspirants.

So far, 16 focus group discussions have been held in Delhi, Patna and Dehradun. The decision to focus on women aspirants, a party leader said, emerged from these discussions, during which female candidates spoke about the greater odds they face, including a narrow window to pursue their careers owing to the "looming deadline" to get married.

A senior party leader said each focus group was curated to bring together participants from different caste, class, gender and geographical backgrounds.

The discussions follow a familiar pattern. Participants speak of inheriting aspirations for government jobs from their families, the years spent preparing for exams, the money invested in coaching centres, and the repeated setbacks caused by paper leaks and delayed recruitments.

Amid '*dimagi* Naxal' row, Rijiju says PM didn't mean Opposition leaders

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A political row erupted over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reference to "*dimagi* [intellectual] Naxals" in his Independence Day address, with Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju clarifying on Sunday that the remark was not aimed at Opposition leaders.

In a post on X, Mr. Rijiju said Mr. Modi's comments were directed only at those who "support Maoists and reject the Indian Constitution", "stand with separatists and support Article 370 [special status for J&K]", and those who "want to cut the chicken neck to separate the north-east from India".

Mr. Modi didn't say Opposition leaders are *dimagi* Naxals, Mr. Rijiju said.

The clarification came after senior Congress leader and former Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram posted on X: "I am proud to be a *dimagi* Naxal!"

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju in a post on X on Sunday listed out the categories the Prime Minister purportedly referred to. SANSAD TV

Addressing the nation on the 80th Independence Day on Saturday, Mr. Modi alleged that *dimagi* Naxals had entrenched themselves in the system and continued to influence society through policy manipulation. He said that while "armed Naxals may have gone", "*dimagi* Naxals are lurking around", and called for "identifying and isolating" them.

Congress Rajya Sabha member Pawan Khera mocked Mr. Rijiju's post. "Brother Kiren Rijiju, get your counting right first, then we'll answer. After 1 and 2 comes 3, not 4," Mr. Khera wrote on X.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh backed Mr. Khera, saying, "Entire Political Science's *kamaal* [magic]," in an apparent reference to Mr. Modi's educational qualification, listed in one of his affidavits as "entire political science".

'No surprise'

The BJP leaders, meanwhile, stepped up their attack on Mr. Chidambaram.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey shared an old video of the former Home Minister in which he purportedly argued against acquiring and inducting nuclear weapons without a wider debate in Parliament and the country.

"Looking at the state of the world today, tell me if this statement by Mr. Chidambaram, a leader of Sonia Gandhi-led Congress, is the statement of a '*dimagi* Naxal' or not?" Mr. Dubey said.

BJP general secretary B.L. Santhosh said there was "no surprise" in Mr. Chidambaram's stance, and alleged that he had been the "PMC (Project Management Consultant) of the saffron terrorism project of the UPA".

BJP govt. in U.P. planning to provide 'stolen money' to women as allowance: SP

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav took a jab at the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday over allegations of donations embezzlement at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. He called on people to vote out the ruling party in the Assembly election scheduled for early next year.

Mr. Yadav shared a three-minute AI-generated video on X that showed people rejecting money offered to them because it was stolen.

Mr. Yadav was responding to reports that the State government was likely to announce a grant of ₹20,000 for women in Uttar Pradesh.

Earlier, Mr. Yadav said on X: "Another BJP *jumla*: a grant of ₹20,000 to U.P.'s women. The BJP has nothing left to win elections except money. Women in Uttar Pradesh say that in other States where they won elections by granting money to women, they are either refusing to pay up or demanding its return. And for those women who are unable to return it, the BJP is taking action against them through the police and courts. A closer look at this issue makes it apparent that the BJP government could have provided ₹50,000 annually, but it didn't. The CM [Yogi Adityanath] has tricked everyone by spending thousands of crores of rupees meant for the rights of women in U.P. on his own publicity."

The SP president countered with his own promise of an annual allowance of ₹40,000 to women. This amount will be increased every year, he said.

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NOTICE INVITING TENDER

PUNGRAIN, on behalf of all State Procuring Agencies (Pungrain, PSWC, Punsup and Markfed), invites online tenders through e-Procurement Portal for the purchase of LDPE Black Tarpaulins for safe storage of paddy to be procured during KMS 2026-27 in the State of Punjab under two Bid system.

For details log onto: https://eproc.punjab.gov.in or http://foodsuppb.gov.in

Bid submission period: From 10:00 AM on 17.08.2026 till 10:00 AM on 08.09.2026.

Pre-bid Conference: On 20.08.2026 at 11:00 AM in the Committee room, Anaaj Bhawan, Sector 39-C, Chandigarh.

Technical Bid Opening: At 10:30 AM on 08.09.2026.

Note:

1. PUNGRAIN reserves the right to scrap the tender at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.
2. Any corrigendum/ addendum to the tender shall be uploaded on the above portal/ website only.

1026/12/2026-27/14312 **Managing Director, Pungrain**

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Phone:28191890/28190259; Fax: 044 -28190636; Mail: equipment.tnmsc@tn.gov.in

Sl. No	Online Tender no with qty./ Document Cost	Sale Period	Pre bid	Submission	Opening
1	E1567/MOB/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - AAC Software with Tablet (174) & Smart Phone (8800) – Rs.5,725/-	18.08.2026 to 16.09.2026	01.09.2026 12.00 Noon	17.09.2026 11.00 AM	17.09.2026 12.00 Noon
2	E1568/EYE/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Reflective Folding Stick (3070) & Modular Reflective Folding Stick (270) – Rs.2,290/-	20.08.2026 to 07.09.2026	27.08.2026 11.00 AM	08.09.2026 11.00 AM	08.09.2026 12.00 Noon
3	E1569/EYE/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Modular Reading Device (114) & Electronic Braille Reader (90) – Rs.5,725/-	20.08.2026 to 07.09.2026	27.08.2026 11.30 AM	08.09.2026 11.00 AM	08.09.2026 12.00 Noon
4	E1570/WC/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Wheel Chair (6266) – Rs.5,725/-	20.08.2026 to 07.09.2026	27.08.2026 12.00 Noon	08.09.2026 11.00 AM	08.09.2026 12.00 Noon
5	E1571/ENT/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Hearing Aid (9000) – Rs.5,725/-	20.08.2026 to 07.09.2026	27.08.2026 12.30 PM	08.09.2026 11.00 AM	08.09.2026 12.00 Noon
6	E1572/SW-MC/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/ 2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Sewing Machine (8150) – Rs.5,725/-	21.08.2026 to 08.09.2026	28.08.2026 11.00 AM	09.09.2026 11.00 AM	09.09.2026 12.00 Noon
7	E1573/T-CYCLE/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/ 2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Tri-Cycle (694) – Rs.5,725/-	21.08.2026 to 08.09.2026	28.08.2026 11.30 AM	09.09.2026 11.00 AM	09.09.2026 12.00 Noon
8	E1574/BWC/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Battery operated Wheel Chair (1642) – Rs.5,725/-	21.08.2026 to 08.09.2026	28.08.2026 12.00 Noon	09.09.2026 11.00 AM	09.09.2026 12.00 Noon

For details visit **www.tntenders.gov.in** and TNMSC website **www.tnmsc.tn.gov.in**
DIPR/ 2585 /TENDER/2026 **GENERAL MANGER (EQUIPMENT)**

भारत सरकार/GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/ अंतरिक्ष विभाग/ DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र/ VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रूप/ CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
तिरुवनंतपुरम/ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 22 / (फोन नं./ Ph. No. 0471 - 2564568 /5669 / 4545/4537)

ई–निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संक्षिप्त सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER दिनांक/Date : 14.08.2026

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्य के लिए ई–टेंडरिंग द्वारा ऑनलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं
On behalf of the President of India, online tenders are invited through e-tendering for the following works.

1. आरपीपी, वीएसएससी, तुंबा के भवन सं. आर-123 में 5 अक्ष सीएनसी मिल टर्न मशीन के लिए नींव का निर्माण (सिविल कार्य)/ Construction of foundation for 5 axis CNC mill turn machine in building no. R-123 at RPP, VSSC, Thumba (Civil works)
   NIT No. VSSC/CMG/C01/13/2026-27 Dt. 14.08.2026 (पी.ए.सी/P.A.C:रु.28.97 लाख/Lakhs)
   डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक **15.08.2026, 10.00** बजे /hrs. से /to दिनांक **29.08.2026, 23.00** बजे /hrs
   ई-निविदा की अवधि बढ़ाना / EXTENSION OF E-TENDER
2. वीआरसी, वीएसएससी, तुंबा में सड़क का पुनःपृष्ठलेपन कार्य / Road resurfacing works at VRC, VSSC, Thumba, **NIT No, VSSC/CMG/C01/11/2026-27 Dt. 24.07.2026 (पी.ए.सी/P.A.C:रु.465.50 लाख/Lakhs)**
   डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक **29.08.2026** को 23:00 बजे तक बढ़ाए गए / Extended upto **23:00 hrs. on 29.08.2026**

इच्छुक निविदाकार ब्यौरों के लिए **www.tenderwizard.in/isro** या **www.isro.gov.in** देखें।/Interested tenderers may visit **www.tenderwizard.in/isro or www.isro.gov.in** for details.

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Head,CMG, VSSC

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Sl. No	Online Tender no with qty./ Document Cost	Sale Period	Pre bid	Submission	Opening
1	E1560/VEH/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Retrofitted Petrol Scooter (15100) & Specially Designed Retrofitted Petrol Scooter for Spinal Cord Injured (350)– Rs.5,725/-	18.08.2026 to 16.09.2026	01.09.2026 11.00 AM	17.09.2026 11.00 AM	17.09.2026 12.00 Noon
2	E1561/CRUCTH/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Auxiliary Crutches (2420), Elbow Crutches (2122) & Walking Device (418) – Rs.3,435/-	18.08.2026 to 01.09.2026	24.08.2026 11.00 AM	02.09.2026 11.00 AM	02.09.2026 12.00 Noon
3	E1562/FR/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Standing Frame Size (502) & Corner Seat Size (476) – Rs.5,725/-	19.08.2026 to 02.09.2026	25.08.2026 11.00 AM	03.09.2026 11.00 AM	03.09.2026 12.00 Noon
4	E1563/P-CAL/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Plastic Caliper (436) – Rs.5,725/-	19.08.2026 to 02.09.2026	25.08.2026 11.30 AM	03.09.2026 11.00 AM	03.09.2026 12.00 Noon
5	E1564/M-CAL/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Metal Caliper (40) – Rs.5,725/-	19.08.2026 to 02.09.2026	25.08.2026 12.00 Noon	03.09.2026 11.00 AM	03.09.2026 12.00 Noon
6	E1565/A-LIMB/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Various type of Artificial Limb (388) – Rs.5,725/-	19.08.2026 to 02.09.2026	25.08.2026 12.30 PM	03.09.2026 11.00 AM	03.09.2026 12.00 Noon
7	E1566/EYE/CWDA/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, dt:14.08.2026 - Magnifier (156), Googles (3020) & Braille Watches (2160) – Rs.5,725/-	19.08.2026 to 02.09.2026	25.08.2026 01.00 PM	03.09.2026 11.00 AM	03.09.2026 12.00 Noon

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DIPR/ 2585 /TENDER/2026 **GENERAL MANGER (EQUIPMENT)**

INBRIEF

One of Assam's sharpest wildlife guard dogs retires

One of Assam's sharpest wildlife guard dogs retired from service on India's 80th Independence Day. Leon, a Belgian Malinois, tracked wildlife crime suspects, assisted in anti-poaching operations, and guarded some of Assam's most precious fauna. The highlight of his career was guiding Assam Forest Department and police personnel to a rhino poacher after following the suspect's scent trail for nearly 20 km across several forest camps and security checkpoints during the 2019 floods. On Saturday, the Forest Department and police retired Leon with official honours in recognition of his service since joining field duty in November 2018.

Navy sailor, wife, 2 children found dead in Mumbai home

The bodies of an Indian Navy sailor, his wife, and their two children were recovered from their official accommodation at Navy Nagar in Mumbai's Colaba on Saturday, prompting the police and naval authorities to launch separate investigations. Naval security personnel and the Mumbai Police were alerted after the family did not respond to telephone calls. A subsequent check of the quarters resulted in the recovery of the bodies. A statement issued by the Navy said the police have registered a case and initiated an inquiry. The residence has been sealed, and a forensic team has examined the premises. "We are providing all assistance to the civil police in their investigation," a Navy representative said.

2 staff injured as passenger's gun goes off at airport in U.P.

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Two workers involved in baggage screening were injured at the Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport in Varanasi on Sunday when a passenger's pistol went off accidentally.

Air India Express passenger Kamlesh Rai, a resident of Azamgarh district in Uttar Pradesh, declared a licensed firearm (7.62 mm pistol with 21 live cartridges) at the check-in counter at the airport as required under the prescribed procedure.

During the inspection of the weapon, it accidentally went off, with a bullet hitting Rohit Raj and Suman Kumari, who were involved in in-line baggage screening.

Ms. Kumari was injured in her leg and Mr. Raj in his thumb. Both were admitted to hospital.

"Today, 16.08.2026, at about 0930 hrs, a passenger travelling with his wife on flight IX-1810 to Mumbai declared weapons [to be carried] on board the flight. During the weapons check, a round went off..., injuring two AAICLAS screeners. Local police have been informed, and an investigation is under way," read a statement by Varanasi Airport Authority.

Panel flags absence of policy to shut mines in Meghalaya

High Court-constituted committee questions the State's lethargy in adopting the policy to close all rat-hole mine openings; the State had been advised years ago to seal illegally operated mines

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

A panel constituted by the High Court of Meghalaya has flagged the State's lethargy in adopting a policy to close all rat-hole mine openings and fence those that pose danger to humans and livestock.

In its 39th Interim Report submitted to the court last week, the one-man Justice (retired) B.P. Katakey Committee underlined the absence of a comprehensive action plan, the non-adoption of a mine closure policy, and serious gaps in the scrutiny of coal-based industries, specifically coke oven plants that thrive on coal.

The panel noted that the Meghalaya government heeded some of its recommendations, but has largely ignored the mine closure policy. The State had been advised years ago to seal abandoned and active but illegally operated mines that have been death traps for humans, specifically children, and livestock.

There are also instances of murderers using these pits to dump the bodies of their victims.

Rescue operations under way at an illegal rat-hole coal mine blast site to rescue trapped mine workers, in East Jaintia Hills. FILE PHOTO

The Katakey panel says the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Limited prepared detailed project reports (DPRs) for two pilot restoration projects – one at Sutnga in East Jaintia Hills (₹63 lakh) and the other at Arenggtim in South Garo Hills district (₹92.78 lakh).

Proposals pending

Both proposals have been pending before the National Green Tribunal-constituted Oversight Committee, a hybrid Centre-State body comprising 12 members.

The Katakey panel observed that the DPRs focus on land restoration, but lack adequate protective measures, including fencing, until works are completed. It insisted that immediate steps are essential to prevent further loss of human and animal lives, noting that thousands of open coal mines exist across Meghalaya.

According to the Jaintia Coal Mines Owners and Dealers' Association, there are about 60,000 mines spread across 360 villages in the East Jaintia Hills district alone. Most of these are abandoned but left uncovered.

The Katakey panel says most districts have not sent their concrete proposals on mine closure to the Mining and Geology Department. It noted that officials from South West Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, West Jaintia Hills, and East Jaintia Hills districts assured submission of proposals within 10 days, while South Garo Hills sought 15 days.

Illegal mining

The National Green Tribunal banned Meghalaya's hazardous rat-hole coal mining in April 2014.

The death of more than 45 miners in the narrow tunnels 150-300 metres underground over the years has indicated that mining has continued illegally in the State.

Such rat-hole mines, so called because their tunnels, branching out horizontally from a deep pit, are large enough for an adult to crawl through, are in operation along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh and Assam-Nagaland borders, too.

FDA issues show-cause notice to actors over ad

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a show-cause notice to actors Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn, and Tiger Shroff over their involvement in an advertisement and promotional material for "Vimal Elaichi", claiming it *prima facie* amounted to "indirect or surrogate" promotion of prohibited pan masala and tobacco-related products.

The sale of pan masala, which can include orally ingested tobacco, is prohibited in the State. The advertisement links the actors to the Vimal brand, indirectly promoting a banned product, the notice says.

'Cease participation'

The three actors came together for the ad campaign for "Vimal Elaichi" in 2024. They have now been directed to cease participation in any related advertising activities.

The FDA, under Commissioner Tukaram Mule, has directed the removal of all content associated with the advertisement, and a detailed explanation from the actors, within 19 days.

He has been in the news for enforcement actions since his appointment.

Sumit Sarkar brought ordinary people, their experiences into history books

TRIBUTE

Janaki Nair

I did not have the good fortune of being taught by Sumit Sarkar. But like every (conscientious) modern Indian historian, I have indeed been 'taught' by him. His classic, *Modern India*, modestly described as a 'textbook', is perhaps the most well-thumbed of my many books. Here, along with colonial masters and nationalist leaders, peasants, workers, and ordinary people sprang from its pages.

This was no simple inclusion: it was a conceptual break, altering our understanding of Indian history in profound ways, acknowledging the lives and actions of millions, even their failures, as the true basis on which to understand our past. But political leaders, their actions, and the periodisations familiar to students of history could not be dispensed with altogether. Therefore, the book, despite its emphasis on the novel breakthroughs of a 'history from below', was sandwiched 'between the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 and the achievement of independence in 1947', since those 60 years 'witnessed perhaps the greatest transition in our country's long history'. In one memorable sentence, he signalled the many unfulfilled promises of Indian nationalism: thus, the Mahatma succeeded in 'drawing in the masses, while at the same time keeping mass activity strictly pegged down to certain forms predetermined by the leader.'

Let me not dwell on the gaping hole that Sarkar's demise had left among historians, and focus instead on the riches he has left us. His book, *Swadeshi Movement in Bengal*, on Bengal's (first) partition of 1905, and the nationalist movement that it spawned, was full of methodological innovations, using plays, novels, newspapers, pamphlets, in addition to the more familiar colonial archive. These materials led him to ask questions that often led to ambiguous or unsatisfactory answers. Educated unemployment and rising prices surely fuelled the anger against the Bengal partition. But the pride-inducing victory of a little 'eastern' nation, Japan, over a powerful 'western' neighbour, Russia, – the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 – also played its part, despite a relative ignorance in India of emerging critiques of imperialism elsewhere.

Sarkar also asked himself: how could a Swadeshi editorial in the *Bande Mataram* praise, in the same breath, both the labour movement and the caste system, the latter for having had 'the true socialistic aim of keeping awake in every class of society a sense of duty to it'? Or, as he would ask later, what drew upper caste men to revolutionary terrorism in Bengal, and why has that memory endured longer than those of tribal or lower caste participants?

Legacy unmatched: Historian Sumit Sarkar passed away on August 13. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

He was among the earliest of historians to unpack how 'Hindu' nationalism gradually became 'common sense', with consequences up to this day.

Sarkar's task was to break out of the economic determinism and narrow positivism that was the hallmark of Marxist scholarship at the time. But the work remains unsurpassed, since it upholds the protocols of historical research, the verifiability of evidence, and as he said, 'the constant knowledge that my conclusions remain open to revision and change'. Would a revised Modern India, that more correctly reflects the scholarship of the last four decades – as many regions, social groups, practices, and events have found their historians - be at all possible in our times? How were material conditions and cultural forms to be integrated within a structured totality?

His Marxism did not come in the way of engaging with what Ranajit Guha has called the oldest (and richest) archive in India: religion. He read religion, but not as a believer; not to denigrate but to connect the celestial world to its earthly presence in meaningful ways.

In fact, Marxism enabled his interest in the 19th-century mystic (and rustic) Hindu thinker Ramakrishna Paramhansa, and the petty-bourgeois, clerical ambience within which he operated, which gave his philosophy its force and material influence, especially among the emerging, well-read, urban middle class. That contradiction needed to be explained. Sarkar linked the belated entry of clock-time into India, and the disciplinary mechanisms it generated, to the slavery of clerical labour, which paved the way for the reception of Ramakrishna.

On RSS and Left

Sarkar showed us the true meaning of engaged scholarship: when India was stunned in 1992 by the shock troops of the BJP and RSS that brought down the Babri Masjid, Sarkar and his colleagues produced a short but vital book called *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags*. It was the first serious historical reconstruction (based also on sensitive fieldwork) of what the RSS had become, the most formidable force on the Indian political firmament. Certainly the young people who have today given us a ray of hope should place this book at the top of their reading lists.

Sarkar, in both his writing and his political positions, was unafraid to confront the official Left and its surrender to global capital, as at Nandigram and Singur. He would have been the first to admit that proletarians have not been the grave diggers of capitalism, though he welcomed historians who showed renewed interest in labour and working class history.

I was personally honoured when this remarkable historian included me in his review of five such books. But more striking was his intellectual openness: his choices 'provincialised' Bengal, by acknowledging the worlds and questions that lay well beyond it - Kanpur, Jamshedpur, KGF, Bombay, the railway works.

At a time when 'everyone' is a historian, and we are being trained in thinking of history only as 'pride' in the past, we will miss complex thinkers like Sarkar even more, for his passing no doubt signals the end of an era.

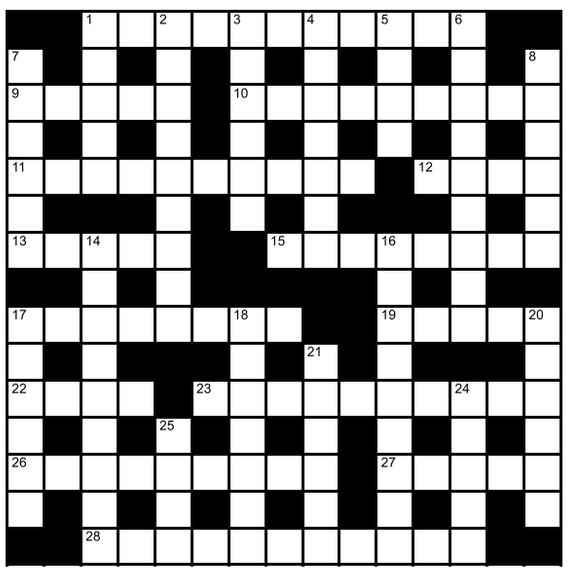
(Janaki Nair is the professor (retd), Centre for Historical Studies, JNU)

THE HINDU CROSSWORD + 14874

(set by Incognito)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Criminal Job's gathering (11)
9 Without males and females... (5)
10 Crooked thing — a piece of golfing equipment — in place for entertainment (9)
11 Creature and monk falling into woodworking equipment (10)
12 Weapons from Mars destroyed (4)
13 Practical joke from knight in park roundabout (5)
15 Poor vets travel and stay overnight (4,4)
17 Rose awkwardly holding dress and strings of beads for prayer (8)
19 Yankee following Lord is before time (5)
22 What a snake might do in barn? (4)
23 Cleared tee by mistake? Slow down! (10)
26 Author's poem is in Welsh residence (9)
27 Perspired, removing pips and made mistake (5)
28 Learnt how I'm confused about spouse's mummy (6-2-3)

Down

1 Biggles' plane, perhaps, arrived at port (5)
2 Perhaps, Norse monk is not a cigar or cigarette user (3-6)
3 Having title, wrongly won gin cocktail (6)
4 Increase soldiers in month with initial threat (7)
5 A small quantity from Anzio tavern (4)
6 African flower produced by Vernier travelling around '49 (4,5)
7 Admits, "Won wrongly by tailless cat when going back" (4,2)
8 Drug addict, perhaps, from a vehicle at Emergency Room (6)
14 Dreamt SAM exploded in city (9)
16 Baked food with church male is cut bit by bit (9)
17 About female animal getting small plants once again (6)
18 Sign and kill (7)
20 Returns damaged lid? Yes! (6)
21 Arabian, perhaps, one following enemy running away (6)
24 A f-fight to get something to use with a bow (5)
25 Tea, I hear, followed tea in discussion (4)

SUDOKU

		3		9				8
2	6					7		
4						1		
					4			2
			8	1	5			
3			2					
		6						9
		2					6	3
7				8		5		

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

O	F	F	S	T	A	G	E	D
C	R	R	O	N	N	I		
T	R	I	C	Y	C	L	E	S
A	D	S	I	M	R	M	T	
N	E	G	O	T	I	A	T	E
E	E	T	O	M	N	E		
R	A	S	H	W	I	E	N	I	E	S
E	S	D	C	S				
D	E	S	T	I	N	Y	T	H	A	I
U	T	A	U	E	A	S	A	
C	D	R	O	M	A	B	R	I	D	G	I	N	G
A	A	I	N	R	A	M	E	
T	O	N	I	N	G	L	I	N	C	H	P	I	N
E	G	O	N	H	L	C		
S	M	E	A	R	S	S	E	D	A	T	E	L	Y

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	2	4	5	7	1	3	8	6
7	8	3	4	9	6	2	5	1
6	5	1	8	3	2	7	9	4
5	3	6	9	8	7	4	1	2
4	1	9	3	2	5	8	6	7
8	7	2	1	6	4	9	3	5
3	4	5	2	1	9	6	7	8
2	6	8	7	5	3	1	4	9
1	9	7	6	4	8	5	2	3

FAITH

Two forms of worship

In the Bhagavad Gita, Canto 12 is dedicated to Bhakti Yoga, the yoga of devotion, said Sri Ramanujamji in a discourse. There are two primary forms of worship and meditation in Hindu philosophy – *Saguna Upasana* (manifestation form) and *Nirguna Upasana* (formless devotion). *Saguna* worship refers to devotion with attributes or with qualities, whereas *Nirguna Upasana* means devotion without attributes or formless devotion. In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna asks Lord Krishna which of the two paths is superior. Lord Krishna replies to Arjuna that while both paths ultimately lead to the same Supreme realisation, *Saguna Upasana*, devotion in personal form, is far easier and more practical for embodied human beings. This forms the foundational essence of Bhakti Yoga. He also explains that *Nirguna Upasana* represents a profound philosophical realisation and is exceptionally difficult for common people because the human mind and intellect naturally rely on names and forms, and need a physical sensory focus.

Saguna dhyana enhances the essence of *nirguna*. Take gold as an example: a solid bar of gold (*nirguna*) versus an intricately crafted wearable golden ornament (*saguna*). Similarly, water in a still, silent lake (*nirguna*), versus a beautifully flowing waterfall that brings joy through its movement and sound (*saguna*). Ultimately, both *saguna* and *nirguna Upasana* are two sides of the same coin, which are inseparable. *Saguna* has the added advantage of letting devotees connect emotionally, whether they view the divine as a master, a friend, a child, a beloved, or their own soul, allowing them to pray, seek compassion, and be guided.

Your portfolio without you

Vaishali R. Venkat

Imagine you are stranded in a desert with no broker's app, no Internet. Buying/selling shares or mutual funds is out of the question. You can't even check your investments.

"So what?" you may ask. "It is only a matter of a few hours." But what if you stay there for a fortnight? You somehow learn to survive, perhaps by imitating a camel. Fortunately, the camel has no portfolio to worry about; its life is free from market crashes, share-price swings and needs no Internet or broker's app.

Managing portfolio

You, however, have spent years carefully building a retirement portfolio. Now comes the acid test: what happens when you are not there to manage it? A crisis such as Chennai's December 2015 deluge, the massive Spain-Portugal power outage of April 2025, or even a prolonged technological disruption can suddenly cut you off from financial life, leaving your own money beyond your reach.

There was also an unverified account doing the rounds on social media of an investor, unable to access their portfolio during the blackout, reportedly 'travelled' nearly 2,000 km from Madrid to Italy to execute trade.

Whether the story is true or not, that's beyond our purview now. But, imagine crossing a border and travelling that far, just to reach your own investments and execute a single trade. Which brings us to the real question: if you cannot reach your portfolio for a couple of weeks, can the portfolio still do its job?

More vulnerable

A portfolio that requires you to watch it every day is vulnerable to more than just market volatility. A vacation abroad, hospitalisation, prolonged power cut owing to floods or natural disasters, lost phone, Internet outage, a few days of inattention or simply a few days away from the screen can have financial consequences, especially a loss. The Madrid investor's story, whether true or not, is an extreme illustration: if being unable to press a button can force you to change your travel plans, perhaps the investment is demanding too much from its owner.

Swing trading

For instance, this is where swing trading often gets mistaken for investing. An investor may buy shares expecting to hold them for years, sometimes decades, to build wealth for life after retirement; a swing trader may buy them expecting to sell after a quicker price move over days or weeks. Neither is inherently wrong. But the second strategy makes access and timing part of the game. If you are stranded without a phone when the price reaches the level at which you intended to sell, your absence suddenly matters. That is not necessarily a bad strategy; it is simply a strategy that cannot be treated as a set-and-forget investment. It is not an investment at all in the first place.

Try this with your portfolio: mentally switch off your phone, Internet and broker account for a fortnight. Then look at each of your investments and ask this question: "What happens if I do nothing for a month?" If the answer is "nothing", that may be a good sign. If the answer is "I must monitor, renew, switch, sell or make a decision", you have discovered something important about the investment, and about your dependence on it.

The distinction is simple: some investments can patiently wait for you; others have a clock ticking in your absence. If an investment depends on you spotting a price, pressing a button or taking a decision at precisely the right time, your absence becomes a risk in itself. A long-term portfolio should ideally have fewer such moving parts. You may be away from your portfolio; your portfolio should not be away from its purpose. Think about it.

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

One more: Another unseen benefit is 'lifelong renewability' of hospitalisation policies. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Think before you don't renew your policy!

We tend to value visible rewards while renewing an insurance policy but rights and benefits accumulated over time, though invisible until you need them, can be far more valuable

BETWEEN THE LINES

K. Nitya Kalyani

She was insured for 11 years with not a single hospitalisation claim but no premium discount in appreciation of a profitable customer was forthcoming. So, my friend did not renew her hospitalisation policy.

Mistake. One because she did not have a fallback policy. But, more so because, in this policy, she had accumulated something. In fact, a goldmine of invisible benefits.

The policy had accrued the maximum bonus sum insured possible due to all those claim-free years. That is, instead of a cash discount, she had been given extra insurance value for the same premium.

She had also availed periodic free or subsidised master health check-ups through the years. And her time-bound exclusions were exclusions no more since the waiting periods were long over.

Expanded coverage

In other words, the scope of her coverage had expanded over time as she persisted with the policy.

We tend to value visible rewards. But rights and benefits accumulated over time, though invisible until you need them, can be far more valuable. Not for nothing is insurance called an intangible product. It is not just a money equation of premium and claims.

> Not for nothing is insurance called an intangible product. It is not just a money equation of premium and claims. It's something more

Lifelong renewability

Another unseen benefit is 'lifelong renewability' of hospitalisation policies.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the insurance sector regulator, has made this mandatory for standard hospitalisation policies without fresh medical tests.

Accordingly, your insurance company cannot refuse renewal or hike your individual premium due to your health setbacks or claims provided you have paid your premiums on time and kept the policy active.

Exceptions are cases such as proven fraud, intentional misrepresentation, false claims, moral hazard and so on.

All these benefits and the real downside of difficulties in getting new policies as age advances makes a strong case for not throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

I only wish this friend had called before her renewal or even during the grace period. She could have kept her coverage and her well-earned benefits intact. She did contact the insurer a couple of months later to renew but it was a no go. And that is as per hospitalisation policy norms.

> The various benefits and the real downside of difficulties in getting new policies as age advances makes a strong case for not throwing the baby out with the bathwater

Losing all

Misreading, or not reading, her policy was a mistake. A bigger misstep was letting it lapse and losing it all. Both she and her agent lost something of value.

She lost her coverage; the agent lost a sale and a customer. He ought to have told her what she stood to lose. The lesson? You may have doubts and questions about the value of your insurance policy, but don't throw it away without an expert once-over.

Now, all I could tell her was to buy a policy afresh and start from square one. Harder when you are 11 years older.

Since you will be assessed anew, health status could have deteriorated and higher risk levels perceived making underwriting more difficult. They may offer you restricted cover and higher premium. Medical tests will almost certainly be required and certain risks can even be declined citing age and company guidelines.

You have to go through the waiting periods for pre-existing diseases all over again and there could be more of them.

Ditto for waiting periods for specified procedures and day-care surgeries. You will have to go through claim-free years again for the bonus in the form of extra sum insured to start accruing.

The Tirukkural says it best: Think before you act; there is little point in deliberating afterwards.

And this is not just about hospitalisation insurance. There are plenty of insurance decisions, acts of omission and commission, that people come to regret. I will share some of those stories in the next instalment of Between the Policy Lines.

What you are letting go

1) Accumulated bonuses
2) Waiting periods for excluded coverage
3) Right to renew
4) Loyalty and continuity benefits such as free medical check-ups and access to health and fitness apps/ trackers
5) Anchor policy to increase sum insured
6) Base policy to build coverage with a top-up or super top up
7) Track record with the insurer and relationships built

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Convertible, portable?

THINKINVESTOR

If you are likely to continually experience work-related relocation, then you must consider investing primarily in financial assets; buying land must be to park surplus cash, not to achieve life goal

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

The asset allocation process helps you determine how much of your savings must be allocated to each asset class. If you were to invest only in financial assets, then the process typically involves deciding how much to invest in equity and bonds. But what if you want to invest in physical assets such as real estate and commodity (read gold)? In this article, we discuss the temptation to invest in physical assets and the factors you must be mindful of before allocating your annual savings to such assets.

Investment portability

Physical assets are touch-and-feel investments, unlike financial assets that are abstract. This is a tempting benefit, as it is easy to relate to a touch-and-feel asset. Also, if these investments do not increase significantly in value, you can always convert them into consumption asset.

Take land. If you are unable to sell land at a higher price, you can build a house for self-occupation. Likewise, you can convert your physical gold bar into jewellery if the investment does not fetch good returns.

Flip side

There is the flip side to investing in physical assets. What if your work requires you to move from one city to another or from State to another? Your real estate is not portable; financial assets are. Also, it takes some effort to convert physical gold into cash. In addition, you need a safe place to store your gold and bank lockers are not easily available. Note that portability of your gold investments (taking gold with you when you relocate) depends on your ability to rent bank lockers or alternative safe storage facilities.

Conclusion

If you are likely to continually experience work-related relocation, then you must consider investing primarily in financial assets. This is not to say that you should not invest in land. But your investment in land must be to park surplus cash and not to achieve a life goal. This is because real estate investment is not liquid. That means you may be unable to convert your investment into cash at a fair price when you need the money to achieve a life goal. Note that Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) are not a pure bet on real estate. That is, REITs are exposed to market risk, as they are listed on a stock exchange.

So, their prices can decline when the market tanks. That said, REITs could be an optimal alternative to lumpy investments in real estate to earn rental income.

(The author offers training programs for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges — Loan amount 5 lakh, Tenure 5 years — Loan amount 1 lakh, Tenure 5 years — (% of loan amount)

Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee
Axis Bank	8.90 onwards	10,355 onwards	2,071 onwards	Up to 2%
Bajaj Finserv	10.00-30.50	10,624-16,177	2,125-3,235	Up to 4.13%
Bank of Baroda*	10.15-18.00	10,660-12,697	2,132-2,539	Up to 2% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Bank of India	10.85-16.15	10,834-12,199	2,167-2,440	Up to 1% (Min. Rs 250; Max. Rs 15,000)
Bank of Maharashtra	9.75-15.00	10,562-11,895	2,112-2,379	Up to 1% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Canara Bank	9.70-15.15	10,550-11.934	2,110-2,387	0.25% (Rs. 500 - Rs. 2,500)
Central Bank of India	11.25 onwards	10,934 onwards	2,187 onwards	Up to 1%
Federal Bank	11.75 - 18.99	11,059 - 12,968	2,212 - 2,594	Up to 3%
HDFC Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to Rs 6,500
HSBC Bank	9.75 onwards	10,562 onwards	2,112 onwards	Up to 2%
ICICI Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to 2%
IDFC FIRST Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to 3.5%
Indian Overseas Bank	10.25 onwards	10,685 onwards	2,137 onwards	Up to 0.75%
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3.5% (2% for instant personal loans for limited period)
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 5%
Poonawalla Fincorp	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to 4%
Punjab & Sind Bank	9.65-13.90	10,538-11,608	2,108-2,322	0.50%-1%
Punjab National Bank	10.25-16.80	10,685-12,373	2,137-2,475	Up to 1%
State Bank of India	10.00-15.00	10,624-11,895	2,125-2,379	Up to 1.50% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Flat Rs. 49
UCO Bank	9.95 - 13.20	10,611-11,428	2,122-2,286	Up to 1% (Min. Rs 750)
Union Bank of India	8.90 - 12.65	10,355-11,287	2,071-2,257	Up to 1% (Max. Rs 7,500)

*Interest concession of 0.10% to customers opting for group credit life insurance.

Car Loans

Rates and Charges — Loan amount 5 lakh, Tenure 5 years — (% of loan amount)

Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee
Bank of Baroda	7.60 - 11.35	10,043 - 10,959	Up to Rs. 2,000
Bank of India	7.60-12.55	10,043 - 11,262	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 2,500 - Rs. 10,000)
Bank of Maharashtra*	7.45-11.75	10,007 - 11,059	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)
Canara Bank**	7.45-11.45	10,007 - 10,984	0.25% (Rs 1,000 - Rs 5,000)
Central Bank of India	7.60-9.30	10,043 - 10,452	0.50%(Rs. 2,000 - Rs. 20,000)
HDFC Bank	8.15 onwards	10,174 onwards	Up to 0.5% (Rs. 3,500 - Rs. 8,000)
ICICI Bank	8.40 onwards	10,234 onwards	Up to Rs. 8,500
IDBI Bank	7.75-9.30	10,078 - 10,452	Rs 2,500
IDFC FIRST Bank	8.99 onwards	10,377 onwards	Up to Rs. 10,000
Indian Bank	7.50-9.65	10,019 - 10,513	Rs. 1,200
Indian Overseas Bank	7.55-12.00	10,031 - 11,122	NIL
Karnataka Bank	8.13-11.65	10,169 - 11,029	Up to 0.60% (Rs. 2,500 - Rs. 11,000)
Punjab and Sind Bank***	7.55-14.05	10,031 - 11,647	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)
Punjab National Bank	7.60-10.70	10,043 - 10,797	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500)
State Bank of India	8.70 - 9.85	10,307 - 10,587	Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 4,000
UCO Bank	7.35-10.00	9,983 - 10,624	0.5% (Max. Rs 5,000)
Union Bank of India	7.50-10.00	10,019 - 10,684	Up to Rs 1,000

*0.25% rate concession for home loan borrowers/other clients with 6-month banking relationship
**50% waiver on processing fee till Sept.30
***Up to 50% processing fee concession for PSB Apna Vahan Sugam.

Rates and charges as on August 12 — **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

BUCHAREST

Spanish fighter jet downs drone in Romania after airspace breach

AFP

A Spanish fighter jet on Sunday shot down a drone that had breached Romanian airspace near the border with Ukraine and Moldova, national authorities and NATO said. The interception of the drone — which entered from Moldova — was carried out by an F-18. Debris fell in an unpopulated area of the Galati region. AFP

JERUSALEM

Israel vows to go after Hezbollah as it names another killed in strikes

AFP

Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz vowed on Sunday it would hit Hezbollah again if threatened, as it identified what it described as a commander killed in strikes a day earlier that also left several children dead. Israeli strikes on Saturday killed 11 people in south Lebanon, as per officials, in one of the deadliest attacks. AFP

CAIRO

U.S. envoy Kushner meets Hamas leader in push for a Gaza road map

AFP

U.S. negotiator and President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner held a rare meeting with Hamas chief Khalil al-Hayya on Sunday in a new diplomatic effort to make progress in the stalled Gaza ceasefire. Mr. Kushner, along with Tony Blair and Nickolay Mladenov, will meet with Israel's Prime Minister on Monday. AP

MAUMERE

Thousands evacuate after quake kills at least 53 people in Indonesia

AP

Around 5,000 people have been evacuated after a magnitude-7.7 earthquake, the deadliest since 2022, rocked eastern Indonesia on Saturday, killing at least 53, blocking roads and causing landslides, authorities said on Sunday. They added that more than 130 people had been injured, many with broken bones. REUTERS

6 killed as Ukraine launches one of its largest aerial attacks on Russia

Russia's Defence Ministry claims it destroyed 822 Ukrainian drones, while Moscow's Mayor says about 600 were headed toward capital region; Russian missile strike hits Ukraine's largest steel producer, forcing partial suspension of operations

Associated Press
KYIV

Ukraine launched hundreds of drones across Russia on Sunday, killing at least six persons in one of Kyiv's largest aerial attacks of the war.

Kyiv has stepped up its attacks on Russia this year, with long-range missiles and swarms of drones targeting military industries and energy facilities. It has also increasingly pummelled giant Wildberries depots, burning billions of dollars' worth of merchandise belonging to the Russian online retail giant. Those attacks have brought the war home to the Russian public nearly four-and-a-half years into Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

A burnt-out hypermarket following an overnight Ukrainian drone strike, in Donetsk, a Russian-held city of Ukraine on Sunday. REUTERS

Meanwhile, Ukraine also came under Russian attack, with drone strikes destroying homes and torching Kyiv's landmark book market.

Russia's Ministry of Defence said it had destroyed 822 Ukrainian drones overnight. Some 600 drones were detected headed toward the Russian capital, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said, with a third of those destroyed over the Moscow region itself.

An 83-year-old man was killed after a Ukrainian drone hit a private home in the Moscow region, local Governor Andrey Vorobyov said. He also confirmed that a Ukrainian attack had sparked a blaze at a Wildberries warehouse in the town of Podolsk.

A drone attack targeted three towns in Russia's southwestern Rostov region, killing five persons, local Governor Yury Slyusar said. The attack, with more than 150 drones, damaged several homes and a railway station and sparked a forest fire.

A Russian missile attack on Ukraine's Kryvyi Rih killed two persons and wounded 14 others, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote on social media Sunday. He also said that one more person had been killed in the city of Sumy.

ArcelorMittal Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine's largest steel producer, confirmed that one of its sites had been hit in a missile attack and that operations had been partially suspended.

Sri Lanka moves to raise retirement age of judges

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan government will table a contentious Bill in Parliament this week seeking to raise the mandatory retirement age of judges of the country's Supreme Court and Court of Appeal, a move critics say could undermine the independence of the judiciary.

According to a media statement issued by Minister of Justice Harshana Nanayakkara, the government will table the proposed constitutional amendment Bill – the 22nd Amendment – on Tuesday. It seeks to amend Article 107(5) of the Constitution to raise the retirement age of Supreme Court judges from 65 to 67 years, and that of Court of Appeal judges from 63 to 65 years.

The Anura Kumara Dissanayake administration has sought to justify the move by saying it would help address the massive backlog of cases, expedite court proceedings, and ensure continuity by retaining experienced and senior judges.

The amendment would help address a backlog of approximately 1.1 million pending cases, Mr. Nanayakkara, an Attorney-at-law, told presspersons.

Anura Kumara Dissanayake

However, the political Opposition, members of the legal fraternity and sections of civil society are fiercely opposing the move, arguing that it would impact the independence of the judiciary.

Fierce opposition

In a social media post, Leader of the Opposition Sajith Premadasa questioned why the extension [of the retirement age] must apply to sitting judges.

Amid the ongoing debate largely confined to Sri Lanka's legal fraternity and sections of civil society, a 20-member delegation of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL), a professional body of lawyers, met President Dissanayake on August 12.

"The BASL emphasised that the proposed amendment would have a serious impact on the independence of the judiciary and that, in the circumstances, the proposed amendment should not be proceeded with. The BASL further pointed out that there are several other urgent matters requiring the attention of the government which must be given priority," the association said in a statement following the meeting.

The President's office said Mr. Dissanayake "stressed that the decision to extend the retirement age of judges was not taken with any individual or group in mind, but in the broader public interest".

Responding to the developments, Margaret Satterthwaite, UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, recently wrote to the government and noted that the amendment, in the form reportedly proposed and in its implications, "may not be in line with international human rights standards related to the independence of the judiciary and the right to a fair trial".

Mining hope

Endless toil: Adults and children search for gold at a mining site in Iga-Barriere in eastern Congo's Ituri province on Friday. Accusations of child labour, unsafe conditions, and corruption have long plagued the country's mining industry. AP

South Korea 'fires warning shots at line of demarcation'

Reuters
SEOUL

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said on Sunday that warning shots had been fired when North Korean soldiers violated the military demarcation line between the countries, prompting them to return.

The *Yonhap* news agency reported earlier on Sunday that warning shots had been fired last week, citing an unnamed source.

"Recently, on the Eastern Front, North Korean forces crossed the military demarcation line, prompting our military to fire warning shots according to operational procedures," a JCS statement said.

Iran offers $30,000 bounty for killing or capturing U.S. soldiers

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iran's military announced on Sunday that it was offering a bounty equivalent to $30,000 for killing or capturing U.S. soldiers, with the reward doubled if carried out by a woman.

Army chief Amir Hatami said the plan had been drawn up following "the large number of requests" to participate in the financial support, according to the *IRNA* state news agency.

There has been no known deployment of United States ground forces in Iran during the West Asia war, with the exception of a rescue mission in April for a downed American pilot.

Mr. Hatami did not provide any details on where or when the killing or capturing of U.S. soldiers was expected to take place.

"Anyone who kills or captures and hands over an invading American military personnel will receive a reward equivalent to $30,000 or 5 billion tomans from the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army," Mr. Hatami said, using an informal unit equivalent to 10,000 Iranian rials.

"Courageous Iranian women who carry out such an action will receive double the reward," he added.

Ben-Gvir advocates killing '30 to 40' people in Gaza nightly

Associated Press
JERUSALEM

An Israeli lawmaker in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition publicly advocated for killing "30 to 40" people in Gaza each night, comments that surfaced on Sunday and were quickly shared by Palestinian media.

Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir made the statement while speaking to a former Gaza-held hostage, Rom Braslavski, on Mr. Braslavski's podcast. The two were discussing Israel's recovery from the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023, when Mr. Ben-Gvir criticised Israel's recent drawdown of strikes in Gaza.

Itamar Ben-Gvir

"It's no secret, I disagree with the Prime Minister," he said. "I think targeted assassinations should be carried out in Gaza, taking down 30 to 40 every night. Not just those who pose an immediate threat – there are people there who are not worthy of life. They shouldn't live. They're not even people."

In the past, similar statements by Mr. Ben-Gvir and other Israeli officials were widely condemned. Many have been presented to the UN's world court as evidence of genocidal intent. Israel denies it has committed genocide in Gaza.

Israel's domestic media has made scarce mention of the statement, highlighting how once-fringe ideologies like Mr. Ben-Gvir's are surging in the lead-up to Israeli elections on October 27. Mr. Ben-Gvir does not have power over the country's military and cannot order strikes on Gaza. But, after operating for decades within Israel's far-right fringe, he is now one of the most influential people in the country.

MAKING IT COUNT

Whenever he gets a chance, he scores runs: Jurel praises Padikkal

AFP

Devdutt Padikkal's maiden Test century drew praise from his India teammate Dhruv Jurel. "He was earlier here with the India-A team just like me and we played at Galle. Whenever he gets a chance, he scores runs. As a fellow cricketer, it feels good that he is doing great for India," Jurel, who had led the India-A team, said on Sunday.

IMPRESSIVE DEBUT

Nuwantha is certainly one for the future, reckons Prabath

AFP

Debutant Sri Lankan offie Keshara Nuwantha found backing from senior spinner Prabath Jayasuriya. "The beauty of Test cricket is to fight it out and hang in there. The way Nuwantha has bowled on debut is superb. He was not afraid to toss it up and create opportunities. He is certainly one for the future," Prabath said.

GRACEFUL IN DEFEAT

Bangladesh outplayed us in all facets: Australia skipper Cummins

AP

Australia captain Pat Cummins admitted that Bangladesh was too good for the home side in the first Test in Darwin. "Bangladesh was a much better side than us this (last) week. I thought that it outplayed us in all facets. Bangladesh was really patient: it did not let us back into the game and it held on to the catches."

BLUNT TALK

It's inevitable Australia has to make changes: Ponting after shock loss

GETTY IMAGES

I think it's inevitable that they (Australia) have to make changes. I am the last one to want to make changes. So it has to get to a bad point before I start saying you ought to leave somebody out — Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting after the team's loss to Bangladesh in the opening Test in Darwin.

Padikkal, Jurel consolidate Team India's position

The former makes 167 while the latter holds the lower-order together with a fine fifty as Gill's men reach 460 for nine at stumps on a rain-hit day; spinners Prabath, Nuwantha share seven wickets

INDIA IN SRI LANKA

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
GALLE

Sunday was largely about waiting for the sun. Fringed by the Indian Ocean and lashed by monsoon winds, Galle woke up to the pitter-patter of rains and birdsong. Umbrellas were out, puddles were the norm and the moist climate had a distinct bearing on the first Test as play resumed well after the lunch break.

Undeterred by the damp skies, India pursued its ambition of posting a healthy first-innings total against Sri Lanka. The goal was achieved with Devdutt Padikkal and Dhruv Jurel lending a hand at varying points. And at close of the second day here at the Galle International Stadium, Shubman Gill's men scored 460 for nine in 116 overs.

Conscious about inclement weather making further intrusions into the remainder of the Test, and resuming at the overnight 288 for two, India sought urgent runs. Centurion Padikkal continued unhindered while Rishabh Pant lashed left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya for four.

The host skipper Dhananjaya de Silva quickly sought the new ball and employed pace and spin in tandem. Pant miscued a hoick off Keshara Nuwantha, and K.L. Rahul returned to the crease.

Rahul, however, had a brief tenure and succumbed to Nuwantha for 82 (175b, 10x4, 1x6) as the debutant off-spinner found turn and appreciable bounce. At the other end Padikkal went past 150 with a whipped four off seamer Asitha Fernando.

With Jurel for company, Padikkal (167, 230b, 15x4, 1x6) was busy shifting gears when he got stumped off Prabath.

Ravindra Jadeja strode in and he too preferred flamboyance over dogged resistance. Even as he departed, Jurel extended India's quest for a 400-plus score. He hoisted Nuwantha for six.

There is a calm air that Jurel always exudes, and he became the lower-order spine. Along with Manav Suthar, he hustled the runs.

It needed a sharp catch from Dhananjaya stationed at first slip for Jurel (51, 68b, 4x4, 1x6) to depart after he prodded at Prabath. Mohammed Siraj jauntily walked in, hit a six, played and missed, and even as the tail wobbled, India would like to believe that it has enough to dominate this opening fixture.

Earlier, persistent rains washed away the first session.

The persevering ground-staff did their best but with dark clouds often rolling in, they had a daunting task of keeping the turf dry. Like the 'Myth of Sisyphus', their effort seemed akin to rolling a boulder uphill.

Coach Gautam Gambhir and batting coach Sitanshu Kotak stepped out and inspected the outfield. Bowling coach Morne Morkel bonded with fellow South African and current Sri Lankan coach Gary Kirsten. And finally when play was about to resume, another wet spell forced the players to hurry back to the pavilion.

Thankfully, the sun enforced its will and the game commenced at 2.35 p.m., and it was India's turn to press forward in a contest that is bound to be held hostage by brooding skies. There is a forecast for more rains in the coming days and every session will be crucial.

In the thick of it: Jurel hit four fours and a six in his 68-ball 51. PTI

Bouncing back: The wily Prabath sent back Padikkal, Jurel and Suthar on day two. AFP

SCOREBOARD

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS

Yashasvi Jaiswal run out 32 *(37b, 5x4)*, K.L. Rahul c Nishan b Nuwantha 82 *(175b, 10x4, 1x6)*, Devdutt Padikkal st. Dickwella b Prabath 167 *(230b, 15x4, 1x6)*, Shubman Gill c Udara b Prabath 16 *(28b, 2x4)*, Rishabh Pant c Dinusha b Nuwantha 39 *(62b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Dhruv Jurel c Dhananjaya b Prabath 51 *(68b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja lbw b Nuwantha 13 *(25b, 1x4)*, Manav Suthar c Udara b Prabath 24 *(43b, 2x4)*, Mohammed Siraj c Dhananjaya b Asitha 11 *(15b, 1x6)*, Kuldeep Yadav (batting) 12 *(13b, 2x4)*, Prasidh Krishna (batting) 1 *(4b)*; Extras (b-4, lb-3, nb-4, w-1): 12; Total (for nine wkts. in 116 overs): 460.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-47 (Jaiswal, 10.6 overs), 2-236 (Gill, 61.5), 3-307 (Pant, 80.4), 4-319 (Rahul, 84.1), 5-357 (Padikkal, 91.3), 6-377 (Jadeja, 98.1), 7-432 (Jurel, 109.1), 8-447 (Siraj, 112.6), 9-447 (Suthar, 113.1).

SRI LANKA BOWLING

Asitha 17-1-61-1, Kumara 13-1-76-0, Nuwantha 39-1-175-3, Prabath 39-6-109-4, Dhananjaya 4-0-15-0, Dinusha 4-0-17-0.

I do what the team needs me to: Jurel

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
GALLE

Jurel. GETTY IMAGES

Progress in a Test is not just about the big knock or the five-for spell, equally it is about efficient performances that slip into the shadows. Dhruv Jurel's 51 was a vital contribution during India's first innings in the opening Test against Sri Lanka, and the wicket-keeper-batter said: "Whenever I go in, I just think about what the team needs."

Speaking to the media at the Galle International Stadium on Sunday, Jurel added: "There is no personal milestone that I look for before batting. I listen to the captain and coach. I go there and do what the team needs, I try to control the situation for the team. It is about being switched on. I had played in the A-series earlier here and I had an idea about the pitch and the weather."

No pressure

Asked if he felt any pressure over his spot in the playing XI, ahead of this game, Jurel countered: "Not at all. I am very grateful that I have the opportunity to represent India. That's the only privilege that I play for."

And as for the urgency on display from the Indian batters, Jurel said: "The plan was to make as many runs as possible by playing sensible cricket. Be it Rishabh Pant or me or the tail, we wanted runs on the board."

Having wrested the initial honours during the first innings, Jurel felt that now it is the turn of the Indian bowlers to drive home the advantage.

"Satisfaction is about winning the match. Our bowlers have to be consistent, bowl long spells. There is no rocket science. We need to put the ball in right areas and get those 20 wickets. Our score of 450-odd is very good on this pitch."

Jurel also pointed out the value of the extended time that India had in Sri Lanka ahead of the Tests. "For India, it is all about volume. We came here 10 days before and trained at Colombo. We had many sessions. Batting on these surfaces helps us improve, and we become aware about the environment and the situation."

The remainder of this rain-affected Test would be interesting and Jurel said: "The three days will be crucial. We have to work hard on all these days. We cannot be thinking about the time we lost to the rains".

Bangladesh earns maiden Test victory in Australia

Agence France-Presse
DARWIN

A dominant Bangladesh stunned Australia to win the first game by nine wickets here on Sunday for a historic maiden Test victory on Australian soil.

After bowling Australia out for 284 in its second innings and needing just 57 runs to win, the visitor cruised home when Mominul Haque slashed Beau Webster to the backward point boundary.

Regular strikes

Bangladesh kept the pressure on throughout and didn't panic when Cameron Green (104) brought up his third Test century after lunch on day four.

Green was offered no real support from his teammates as the away side struck at regular intervals, with off-spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz finishing with five for 66.

When Australia resumed on 161 for four, its hopes were pinned on Alex Carey and Green.

Carey lived dangerously in the opening 30 minutes, twice edging seamer Hasan Mahmud through the vacant slips cordon for boundaries. But on 30, Mehidy produced a beautiful ball, pitching in line and turning sharply to take Carey's outside edge to wicketkeeper Litton Das.

He struck again soon after, bowling Webster for five to leave Australia 193 for six and in deep trouble.

Bangladesh edged closer to a famous victory when Australia captain Pat Cummins pushed forward to a Mehidy delivery and got an inside edge to short leg, where Shadman Islam took a sharp chance.

Green and Mitchell Starc played sensibly to ensure Bangladesh had to bat again.

The visiting side got home in the 15th over.

Tormentor: Off-spinner Mehidy, right, hastened Australia's end with his 15th five-for. AP

SCOREBOARD

Australia — 1st innings: 198.
Bangladesh — 1st innings: 426.
Australia — 2nd innings: Travis Head b Mahmud 17, Jake Weatherald b Mahmud 0, Marnus Labuschagne b Taijul 31, Steve Smith c & b Mehidy 44, Cameron Green b Mahmud 104, Alex Carey c Litton b Mehidy 30, Beau Webster b Mehidy 5, Pat Cummins c Shadman b Mehidy 8, Mitchell Starc c Litton b Taskin 18, Nathan Lyon lbw b Mehidy 15, Josh Hazlewood (not out) 0; Extras (b-1, lb-6, nb-5): 12; Total (in 95.1 overs): 284.
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-37, 3-73, 4-122, 5-178, 6-193, 7-207, 8-250, 9-278.
Bangladesh bowling: Taskin 18-3-66-1, Mahmud 19-3-56-3, Ebadot 8-0-38-0, Taijul 17-1-51-1, Mehidy 33.1-6-66-5.
Bangladesh — 2nd innings: Shadman Islam (not out) 25, Tanzid Hasan b Hazlewood 0, Mominul Haque (not out) 30; Extras (lb-2): 2; Total (for one wkt. in 14.2 overs): 57.
Fall of wicket: 1-4.
Australia bowling: Starc 4-0-15-0, Hazlewood 3-1-5-1, Lyon 5-0-23-0, Webster 2.2-0-12-0.
Bangladesh won by nine wickets.
Player-of-the-Match: Mahmud.
Second Test: August 22 to 26, Mackay.

Biggest win in Bangladesh's history, says proud Shanto

Agence France-Presse
DARWIN

Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto described Bangladesh's stunning nine-wicket win over Australia in the first Test here as the country's best result in its cricket history but warned that it cannot be a one-off.

"This is the biggest win so far for Bangladesh in any format," Shanto said. "We want to do something special in the future."

Fresh from a video call with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, Shanto said that his side was determined to play just as well in the second Test, which starts on August 22 in Mackay. Leading into the game here, Bangladesh lost a Test to Zimbabwe by an innings and 85 runs and was thrashed by Cricket Australia XI in a warm-up game.

A triumph to savour: Bangladesh players on cloud nine. AFP

"We need to be consistent as a team," Shanto said. "We did not play well against Zimbabwe, but the confidence was still there because we had won against Pakistan in Bangladesh (in May). Before we came here, we had the belief that we will play good cricket."

Shanto warned that Australia would be eager to bounce back.

"As I said before this Test match, we wanted to play five days of good cricket, so nothing has changed. Going into the next Test, we need to follow the process, accept the challenges and enjoy those. Australia has a quality bowling attack, so we have to play good cricket again. As a bowling unit, we have to be disciplined again," the skipper added.

INBRIEF

Sevilla snatches a win over Vallecano, Alaves beats Getafe

Sevilla scored from two second-half penalties as it came roaring back from a goal down to beat Rayo Vallecano 2-1 at home while Alaves hammered 10-man Getafe 3-0 as Spain's LaLiga got under way on Saturday evening.

The results: Alaves 3 (Tenaglia 73, Mariano 90+1, Rodriguez 90+4) bt Getafe 0; Sevilla 2 (Guridi 52-pen, Peque 90+7-pen) bt Rayo Vallecano 1 (Garcia 4).

Delhi routs Assam in junior women's National hockey

Delhi blanked Assam 6-0 in a Division-B (Pool-A) match of the 16th Hockey India junior women's National championship in Pune on Sunday.

The results: Division-A: Pool-A: Jharkhand bt Chandigarh 6-0; **Pool-B:** Haryana bt Bengal 10-1; **Pool-C:** Uttar Pradesh bt Manipur 1-1; **Pool-D:** Chhattisgarh bt Himachal 6-4. **Division-B: Pool-A:** Delhi bt Assam 6-0; **Pool-B:** Uttarakhand bt Tamil Nadu 3-1.

Djokovic falls to Tirante in punishing conditions

Novak Djokovic suffered from punishing heat and humidity on Saturday but made a match of it before falling 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 to Thiago Tirante in what could be the Serb's last appearance at the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters. "It was a combination of the heat and humidity, all those things," he said. "Everything involved makes it worse." The Serb, who must now try to regroup before the US Open starts on August 30, admitted he might have played his last match in Cincy. "It looks like I won't be back, unfortunately to play here," he said. Tirante called the win the best of his career. "I managed the nerves of playing a legend like Novak. It was all so much pressure."

LIVE TELECAST

Badminton: World Championships, Sports 18-1, Sports 18-3 & BWF Official YouTube channel, 9 a.m. onwards

Sri Lanka vs India: First Test, Day 3, Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 9.45 a.m.

Hockey World Cup: (Women), SS Select 2, Star Sports First & JioHotstar, 1 p.m. 2.30, 8.30 & 9.30 p.m.; (Men): SS Select 2, Star Sports First & JioHotstar, 4 p.m. 5.30, India vs England, 6.30 p.m. & 12 a.m. (Tuesday)

Durand Cup: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 4 & 7 p.m.

LaLiga: FanCode, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Indian women's inexperience hurts them in a stalemate against China

The team dominates the opening 30 minues but with eight debutants on show it is unable to stop its higher-ranked rival from fighting back

HOCKEY WORLD CUP

Aashin Prasad
AMSTELVEEN

It was a game of two halves with India dominating the opening 30 minutes, before China turned the tables to assert why it is ranked five places above its Asian rival.

India had eight World Cup debutants on show, who played with youthful zest but the inexperience ultimately hurt it in its 2-2 draw against China in its Women's World Cup Pool D opener here at the Wagener Stadion on Sunday.

India deservedly went 2-1 ahead at the break after goals from Navneet Kaur and Deepika. India's vertical approach, through the wings, troubled China's backline as Deepika and Lalremsiami, in particular, looked dangerous with their dribbling and close control.

Hemmed in: Deepika, who scored India's second goal, is crowded by the Chinese.

The opening goal came in the seventh minute when Neha fired in a pass to Navneet, which she deftly guided past several feet into the bottom corner of the goal.

But a poor foul inside the circle by defender Shilpi Dabas, playing only her sixth senior game, in the dying seconds of the first quarter, allowed China to get on the scoresheet from a Ying Zhang penalty stroke.

Tactical talk

At the end of the first quarter tactical team talk, India responded to Sjoerd Marijne's animated instructions by outplaying China.

Every time China looked to play out of its own half, the Indian players swarmed around them, snapping at them, to win the ball and force a turnover.

In the 24th minute, Deepika's mazy run into the circle, earned India its third Penalty Corner, from which she converted.

But early in the second half, the warning signs started to ring for the Indian team. China cut out India's outlet of playing the ball out from the flanks and pinned it in its own half.

China's gangly midfielder Li Hong asserted herself, dictating play, before it restored parity for the second time from a rasping dragflick from Ma Ning.

In the last two quarters, China had 13 circle penetrations to India's three, while adding four PC opportunities to restrict India to none. Savita Punia made crucial interventions as India hung for a valuable point.

The Indian men's team will take on England in its second Pool D game on Monday.

The result: China 2 (Ying Zhang 14, Ma Ning 38) drew with India 2 (Navneet Kaur 7, Deepika 24).

Rakshith makes the most of Chiranth's 30-second penalty

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Rakshith Dave, 18, inherited victory in the premier Super Sport 301-400cc class following a 30-second penalty to Chiranth Vishwanath, who took the chequered flag first, as the first round of the MRF Indian National Racing Challenge 2W-2026 concluded at the Madras International Circuit here on Sunday.

Earlier, 16-year-old Kabilesh Rajini Krishnan, son of 11-time National champion Rajini Krishnan, scripted his maiden win in domestic competition by topping the Super Stock 301-400cc race.

Equally impressive was Ann Jennifer (Motul Sparks Racing), a former National woman champion, who won the Super Stock 165cc race. She thus completed a grand double, having won Race-1 on Saturday.

On the podium: Rakshith, centre, is flanked by second-placed Rahil, left, and Mikail.

The results: Super Sport 301-400cc Open (Race-2): 1. Rakshith Dave (Petronas TVS Racing) (11mins, 04.384secs); 2. Rahil Pillarisetty (RACR Castrol Power1) (11:05.051); 3. Mohamed Mikail (MadRabbit Racing) (11:05.592).

Pro-Stock 200cc Open (Race-2): 1. R.S. Abdul Basim (Chandra LGE Racing) (11:56.275); 2. Amarnath K. Menon (MadRabbit Racing) (11:56.365); 3. P.M. Soorya (Chandra LGE Racing) (11:56.876).

Super Stock 301-400cc Open (Race-2): 1. Kabilesh Rajni Krishnan (RACR Castrol Power1) (11:42.885); 2. Allwin Xavier (RACR Castrol Power1) (11:43.025); 3. Seshadri (Motul Gusto Racing) (11:43.254).

Super Stock 165cc Intermediate (Race-2): 1. A.S. Ann Jennifer (Motul Sparks Racing) (12:51.378); 2. S. Anand Kumar (Ipone Yakuza Racing India) (12:52.927); 3. K.K. Anandhu (Veedol C2 Racing) (12:56.928).

Stock 301-400cc (Novice) Race-2: 1. R. Ashwin (12:22.013); 2. V. Lokesh (Speed Up Racing) (12:22.085); 3. S. Venugopalan (12:23.011).

Stock 165cc (Novice) Race-2: 1. R. Hari Haran (RACR Castrol Power1) (13:11.607); 2. Yashwant Varma (Motul Sparks Racing) (13:11.885); 3. Dev Agastya (Pvt.) (13:12.151).

Petronas TVS Racing One-Make Championship: Open (RR 310) Race-2: 1. Kamal Navas (11:45.349); 2. Rajender Beedani (11:45.565); 3. R. Hari Haran (11:48.211).

Rookie (RTR 200) Race-2 (4 laps): 1. Dev Agastya (08:52.667); 2. Rehbar Islam Baktoo (08:52.794); 3. Pothu Vignesh (08:52.921).

Electric RTE (4 laps): 1. Mohamed Mikail (07:27.506); 2. Rakshith Dave (07:31.753); 3. Savion Sabu (07:40.792).

TNCA LEAGUE

Sanjay Shrinivas, Tharun Kumar shine for Indian Bank

S. Sanjay Shrinivas' 178 and V. Tharun Kumar's 112 powered Indian Bank to a mammoth 402 and beat SNJ RC by 213 runs in the TNCA III-A match played recently. The duo added 205 runs off 153 balls for the third-wicket.

In V-A, V.P. Vishal's six for 45 went in vain as Globe CC went down to The Triplicane CC by 56 runs.

The scores: III-A: Indian Bank 402/6 in 50 overs (S. Sanjay Shrinivas 178, V. Tharun Kumar 112, V. Nepolian 39 n.o.) bt SNJ RC 189 in 43.3 overs (J. Jai Suriya 77, J. Vignesh 3/29).

Aruna CC 178 in 41.4 overs (S. Kavin Kumar 52, F. Edwin Richard 36, K. Karthik Rahul 3/46) lost to Royapettah CC 182/3 in 35.1 overs (S. Venkadesan 55, R. Arun Kumar 39 n.o.).

Spic 189 in 49.5 overs (U. Jakvis Yosaph 55, M.P. Abhiman Sundar 3/23) lost to Chatnath190/6 in 47.3 overs (M. Thiyagarajan 47, Kanishka C. Arvind 32, Dhruv Shivasundar 4/44).

Mambalam Mosquitos 146 in 38.1 overs (T.A. Sanjay 44, M. Vasisht 38, D. Suriya Prakash 4/39) lost to Falcon CC 150/5 in 28.4 overs (S.S. Sharath Maalan 39, Patrick Jefferson 32 n.o, J. Daksh Bala 4/25).

V-A: Unicorn CC 198 in 48 overs (K. Farhaan 73, K. Jayakanthan 39, V. Nithilan Venkatesan 3/75, Raul Roshan 4/21) drew with

Sanjay Shrinivas (Indian Bank, 178), Tharun Kumar (Indian Bank 112), Vishal (Globe, 6/45).

Namasivayam (Gandhi Nagar Starlets, 123 n.o.), Manikandan (Gandhi Nagar Starlets, 5/41), Kiran Raj (Bharathi SC, 5/21).

Chandru (Netaji, 5/29), Sundar (Gopalapuram CC, 5/26).

Grove CC 183/5 in 38.4 overs (S. Barath 33, Deepak Shanmuganathan 66 n.o, Shiv Ganesh 59, Y. Tushar 3/40). Due to rain no further play possible. Each team got one point.

The Triplicane CC 183 in 39.4 overs (G. Rajesh Kanna 46, E. Karpaga Ganapathy 49, V.P. Vishal 6/45) bt Globe CC 127 in 33.5 (B. Sriram 44 n.o, H. Sai Sachin 4/23).

Gandhi Nagar Starlets 306/7 in 50 overs (B. Arunkumar 54, K. Namasivayam 123 n.o., Abhinav Ramesh 67) bt Triplicane RC 83 in 25.5 overs (B.G. Ramkaanth 32, S. Manikandan 5/41).

GTUC 130 in 37.5 overs (S. Bharanidharan 40, M. Churchill 4/21, Dhivahar 3/15) lost to TFUCC 134 /2 in 28.3 overs (J. Tamil Selvan 59, Aaship Ahamed 43 n.o.).

Magnet CC 126 in 41.3 overs (M. Ram Babu 37, A.Gokul Raaj 33, S. Kiran Raj Yadav 5/31) lost to Bharathi SC 130/4 in 33 overs (S. Maithresh 45, Gautam Anand 34 n.o.).

Netaji CC 89 in 22 overs (Mohamad Arfaz 32, S. Sundar 5/26, Pradesh 3/8) lost to Gopalapuram CC 91/7 in 23 overs (S. Saurabh Kumar 31, Pradesh 31 n.o., M. Chandru 5/29).

We are relying on learnings from previous events, tells Praggnanandhaa's coach Suri

CHESS

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

After a bumpy start to the year, R. Praggnanandhaa has hit a purple patch. He made heads turn with a historic triumph in Norway Chess and stormed to victory in St. Louis Rapid & Blitz last week.

As Praggnanandhaa lets his moves do the talking on the board, the work he has been putting in with coach Vaibhav Suri seems to be paying off. "We did pay a little more attention to the opponents (in St. Louis) and tried to be in control. In the shorter formats, [holding the] nerves play a big role. I think that he was in far better control than in previous events," Suri said.

It is all about learning constantly and improving, Suri emphasised as his ward continues the good run in the ongoing Sinquefield Cup in the USA – the 21-year-old put it across World championship challenger Javokhir Sindarov and Jordan van Foreest. "Preparation plays a huge part in classical chess, and we are relying on the learnings from previous events."

Mentor and Mentee: Suri says Praggnanandhaa played with control in St. Louis. NORWAY CHESS

With the Olympiad on the horizon and the in-form Praggnanandhaa expected to lead the Open team's challenge, Suri felt that India had a strong squad, adding "there are huge expectations because we are the defending champions."

"The focus is going to be on trying to put the four best players on that given day and hope that they play their best. I am sure that Pragg, D. Gukesh, Arjun Erigaisi, Nihal Sarin and Vidit Gujrathi will be preparing very seriously for the Olympiad".

Alfonsine should score an encore in Nizam's Gold Cup

HYDERABAD: The four-year-old gelding Alfonsine should score an encore in the Nizam's Gold Cup, the stellar attraction of Monday's (Aug. 17) races.

1 HIMAYAT SAGAR TROPHY (Div. II) (1,100m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 12. 45 p.m.: 1. Ek (4) Afroz K 61.5, 2. Her Ladyship (5) Mukesh K 61.5, 3. Flying Fury (3) G. Naresh 61, 4. Tiger Ruby (8) Surya Prakash 60, 5. Inderdhanush (6) A.A. Vikrant 57.5, 6. Quick Bay Fox (1) Neeraj 57, 7. Lego (9) Rafique Sk. 56, 8. Noorian (7) Md. Ismail 54.5, 9. Golden Unicorn (2) Shivam 53 and 10. Star Councillor (10) Kuldeep Sr. 51.

1. EK, 2. QUICK BAY FOX, 3. TIGER RUBY

2 DONCASTER PLATE (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden Fillies, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 1.15: 1. Classy Touch (6) Neeraj 54.5, 2. Como (2) Trevor 54.5, 3. Emergent (4) Akshay K 54.5, 4. Gacchanmanasvin (10) M.S. Deora 54.5, 5. Haviva (5) Surya Prakash 54.5, 6. Love In Paris (1) R.S. Jodha 54.5, 7. Maggie (8) I. Chisty 54.5, 8. Miri (3) Mohit 54.5, 9. Queen Eternal (9) Ashad Asbar 54.5 and 10. Speedy Queen (7) P. Ajeeth K 54.5.

1. QUEEN ETERNAL, 2. COMO, 3. EMERGENT

3 B. MARIDESHWARA RAO MEMORIAL TROPHY (Div. II) (1,200m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 1.50: 1. Dubai Touch (6) M.S. Deora 60.5, 2. Gloria (8) Akshay K 59.5, 3. N R I Ultrapower (1) B.R. Kumar 59, 4. Fortis (4) Trevor 56.5, 5. Federer (5) P. Ajeeth K 55, 6. Perfect Light (7) Kuldeep Jr. 55, 7. Colt Pistol (9) Rafique Sk. 53, 8. Calabasas (2) Ajay K 52.5 and 9. Coming Home (3) B. Nikhil 51.5.

1. FORTIS, 2. DUBAI TOUCH, 3. GLORIA

4 HIMAYAT SAGAR TROPHY (Div. I) (1,100m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.25: 1. Double Bubble (1) Kuldeep Sr. 61.5, 2. Linda (5) Akshay K 60, 3. Bold Beauty (4) Santosh Raj 59.5, 4. Ojas Maximus (2) A.A. Vikrant 58.5, 5. Swiss Girl (9) Abhay Singh 58.5, 6. Nyanza (10) Surya Prakash 57, 7. Cherish The Lady (7) Ajay K 56.5, 8. Anemoi (3) Kuldeep Jr. 54, 9. Atreya (8) D.S. Deora 51.5 and 10. Rate Of Interest (6) Arjun 50.

1. OJAS MAXIMUS, 2. LINDA, 3. DOUBLE BUBBLE

5 B. MARIDESHWARA RAO MEMORIAL TROPHY (Div. I) (1,200m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3.00: 1. Strauss (6) D.S. Deora 61, 2. Shadow Fax (7) Shivam 60, 3. Warwick (5) P. Ajeeth K 59, 4. Emerald Touch (3) Neeraj 58.5, 5. SANGREAL (1) P. Sai K 55.5, 6. Foxy Girl (9) Kuldeep Jr. 55, 7. Blue Pantheress (4) Rafique Sk. 53.5, 8. Home Run (2) Kuldeep Sr. 52 and 9. Zuza (8) Akshay K 52.

1. EMERALD TOUCH, 2. WARWICK, 3. SANGREAL

6 NIZAM'S GOLD CUP (Gr. II) (2,000m) (Terms), 4-y-o and upward, 3.35: 1. Alfonsine (5) Trevor 56, 2. Mayne Magic (1) Suraj Narredu 55.5, 3. Nonpariel (3) Mukesh K 54.5, 4. Prokofiev (2) Antony Raj 54.5, 5. Red Bishop (4) Vivek G 54.5, 6. Star Of Night (7) B.R. Kumar 54, 7. Galahad (11) Akshay K 53.5, 8. Get Lucky (10) Kuldeep Sr. 53.5, 9. Perception (12) G. Naresh 53.5, 10. Secret Saint (9) Shivam 53.5, 11. Tolkien (6) Neeraj 53.5 and 12. Vyasa (8) Ashad Asbar 53.5.

1. ALFONSINE, 2. MAYNE MAGIC, 3. PROKOFIEV

7 ROYAL WINDSOR PLATE (1,400m) (Terms), 4-y-o and upward (Cat. I), 4.10: 1. Ashoka (10) Akshay K 62, 2. High Command (9) P. Ajeeth K 59, 3. Cherie Chevalirer (7) P. Sai K 58, 4. Espionage (11) Kuldeep Sr. 58, 5. Lux Aeterna (5) Trevor 56.5, 6. Vivaldo (1) A.A. Vikrant 56, 7. Uchchaihshravas (2) Md. Ismail 54, 8. Black Onyx (8) D.S. Deora 52, 9. Brilliant Lad (3) Neeraj 52, 10. Hurricane Bay (6) Afroz K 52 and 11. Reigning Beauty (4) Santosh Raj 50.5.

1. ASHOKA, 2. BRILLIANT LAD, 3. LUX AETERNA

8 BROWN JACK PLATE (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III), 4.45: 1. Glimmer Of Hope (7) Gaurav 62, 2. Aos Si (8) Antony Raj 61.5, 3. Deccan Ranger (13) B.R. Kumar 61.5, 4. Desert Sultan (14) Mukesh K 61.5, 5. Fortune Art (12) Kuldeep Sr. 61, 6. Hoping High (9) Mohit 61, 7. Sucker Punch (4) A.A. Vikrant 61, 8. Golden Inzio (1) Shivam 60.5, 9. Midnight Beauty (6) Surya Prakash 60.5, 10. Rani Ruckus (11) G. Naresh 60, 11. Politics (3) Arjun 59.5, 12. Muaser (10) P. Ajeeth K 59, 13. Iconic Star (5) Rafique Sk. 51 and 14. Niloufer The Great (2) Kuldeep Jr. 50.

1. AOS SI, 2. GLIMMER OF HOPE, 3. FORTUNE ART

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Bulletproof bags the feature event

HYDERABAD: Trainer S.S. Attaollahi's colt Bulletproof, ridden by P. Trevor, won the K. Mahipathi Rao Memorial Golconda Juvenile Million, the main event of Sunday's (Aug. 16) races.

The winner is owned by M/s. Blazing Saddles (PF), Mr. Marthand Singh Mahindra, Mr. Rama Seshu Eyunni and Mr. Maloji Bhosale.

1. RAZIA SULTANA PLATE (1,600M): MASTER CLASS (Gaurav Singh) 1, Grit 'N' Grace (Shivam) 2, Smashing Grey (Afroz K) 3 and Aakarshaka (Md. Ismail) 4. 1-1/2, 2-1/4 and 4. 1m 39.67s. ₹20 (w), 11, 10 and 18 (p). SHP: 28, THP: 48, FP: 36, Q: 20, Tanala: 247. Favourite: Grit 'N' Grace.

Owners: M/s. B. Vijay, Rameshbhai Amrutlal Mehta & L. Arun Kumar. Trainer: N. Ravinder Singh.

2. LOYAL MAZNAR PLATE (1,600M): LA FLEURIERE (Kuldeep Singh Jr.) 1, Special Star (Ajay K) 2, Wolf Creek (Ashad Asbar) 3 and Pristine Glory (Trevor) 4. 1-1/4, Head and Neck. 1m 40.40s. ₹107 (w), 31, 19 and 10 (p). SHP: 48, THP: 30, FP: 1,432, Q: 389, Tanala: 4,309. Favourite: Pristine Glory.

Owner: M/s. Sarainaga Racing Pvt. Ltd. Trainer: Bharat Singh.

3. INDEPENDENCE TROPHY (1,100M): STAR OF OPERA (Shivam) 1, See The Light (Trevor) 2, Diligence (Kuldeep Sr.) 3 and Rival (P. Sai K) 4. 3-1/2, 2 and 3/4. 1m 6.19s. ₹23 (w), 16, 15 and 10 (p). SHP: 33, THP: 38, FP: 49, Q: 29, Tanala: 105. Favourite: Star Of Opera.

Owners: Mr. Rajendran rep. Rapar's Galloping Stars LLP, M/s. Prabhakar Chowdary Tripuraneni & P. Ranga Raju. Trainer: D. Netto.

4. VETERINARY AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DEPARTMENT TROPHY (1,400M): SUPER SPLASH (P. Ajeeth Kumar) 1, Gold Touch (Kuldeep Sr.) 2, Onslaught (Md. Ismail) 3 and Quality Warrior (Santosh Raj) 4. 5-1/4, 1-1/2 and 4-1/2. 1m 26.82s. ₹16 (w), 10, 10 and 16 (p). SHP: 24, THP: 38, FP: 25, Q: 19, Tanala: 81. Favourite: Super Splash.

Owner: Mr. Suresh Chintamaneni. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

5. K. MAHIPATHI RAO MEMORIAL GOLCONDA JUVENILE MILLION (1,400M): BULLETPROOF (P. Trevor) 1, Quattro (B.R. Kumar) 2, Garfunkle (Ashad Asbar) 3 and Buddy (D.S. Deora) 4. Neck, 3/4 and 3. 1m 26.20s. ₹17 (w), 10, 26 and 18 (p). SHP: 54, THP: 44, FP: 68, Q: 63, Tanala: 269. Favourite: Bulletproof.

Owners: M/s. Blazing Saddles (PF), Mr. Marthand Singh, Mr. Rama Seshu Eyunni and Mr. Maloji Bhosale. Trainer: S.S. Attaollahi.

6. GRAND PARADE PLATE (1,600M): MOUNTAIN TOUCH (P. Trevor) 1, Take A Breath (Rafique Sk.) 2, Sadiya (P. Ajeeth K) 3 and Sargent (B.R. Kumar) 4. 3, 8 and 2. 1m 41.43s. ₹14 (w), 10, 22 and 19 (p). SHP: 40, THP: 28, FP: 41, Q: 47, Tanala: 164. Favourite: Mountain Touch.

Owners: M/s. N. Shyam Sunder, A.C. Subbaiah & Vara Prasad Reddy. Trainer: Neelesh Rawal.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹2,502 (79 tkts.), 30%: 580 (146 tkts.).

Mini Jackpot: 140 (573 tkts.).

Treble: (i) 826 (25 tkts.), (ii) 52 (435 tkts.).

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The following e-tenders are published in IREPS website. Firms are requested to login to **www.ireps.gov.in** and quote against these tenders. Manual quotation will not be entertained for this tender.

SL. No.	Open Tender No.	Short Description of Work	Approx. Value in ₹	Date of Tender Closing Date & Time
1	2026377 212323	(A) New Raw & Metro Water Pipelines: East Colony to Furnishing Factory & Main Pump House to Block 165 (B) Repairs to leakages in GLR & OHT and Interconnection of pump houses in South colony. (C) New GLR & OHT in South colony (D) 3.00 Lakh GLR in East colony- 2Nos (E) OHT & GLR in Shell Factory (F) Reconstruction of 3 Lakh litres capacity at GLR in East Colony - 2 Nos	₹ 5.93/- crores	04.09.2026 @ 10.30 hrs

Hindi version of the above advertisement is available in the website: **www.icf.indianrailways.gov.in/**

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2026440 212294	Works contract of "Comprehensive Annual Maintenance contract (CAMC) of Horizontal Drilling & Tapping Machine-Inv No.2192 available in Shop 12 of Shell Division, ICF for a period of three years.	₹ 63,40,653/-	31.08.2026 15.00 Hours
20264762 12078RT2	Reconditioning of Grit Blasting Plant-Inv. No. 2517 available in Shop-23 of Shell division/ICF	₹ 58,25,562/-	31.08.2026 15.00 Hours

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Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer / Plant

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Sr. DEN (South) MMCT, Western Railway, Mumbai Central, Mumbai – 400008, invites **Tender Notice No.: BCT/26-27/109, dt.11.08.2026. Work and location**: Churchgate - Jalgaon Section: - Supply, installation commissioning and operating (5 years) track-based rail Gauge Face Lubricators (Electronic type and carry down effect up to 1 km) between Churchgate to Jalgaon. **Approx. cost of work**: ₹ 17,55,103,16.40. **EMD**: ₹ 10,27,600/-. **Date & Time of Submission**: Till 11.09.2026, 15:00 Hrs. **Date and Time of Opening**: On 11.09.2026 at 15:30hrs. For further details please visit our website **www.ireps.gov.in** 0478

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WESTERN RAILWAY

MODIFICATION, DESIGN, LAYING AND COMMISSIONING WORK

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Construction) Western Railway, DRM Office Annex Building 3rd Floor Do Batti, Ratlam (M.P.) 457001. invites **Tender Notice No.: EL-C-RTM-2026-07-T, Date: 13.08.2026. Name of Work**: Modification, design, laying and commissioning of HT & LT Electrical crossings/ line infringements in the section of Godhra- Ratlam, in connection with Vadodara - Ratlam section Quadrupling project of Ratlam Division, Western Railways. **Approx Value**: ₹ 6,63,63,506.87. **Bid Deposit**: ₹ 13,27,300/-. **Online Bidding Start Date**: 28.08.2026. **Tender Closing Date**: On 11.09.2026 at 15:00 hrs. For further details please visit our website **www.ireps.gov.in** 0482

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Strengthening institutional capacity, measuring outcomes reliably and using better regional data can create more opportunities for all learners

Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar

India's higher education system faces two challenges at once. A qualification earned in one part of the country should be recognised and respected elsewhere but the education offered must also be relevant to its students, languages, social setting, and surrounding economy. These aims may appear to pull in different directions. In practice, they can reinforce each other.

This balance is the essence of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It calls for careful planning, joint monitoring, and collaboration between the Centre and the States, supports institutional autonomy and the expansion of programmes in local languages, and provides meaningful room for State priorities and local aspirations.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Guidelines

National frameworks provide broad guidelines to the institutions without imposing rigid prescriptions. For instance, the UGC framework leaves important academic decisions to institutional statutory bodies. NEP 2020 seeks to remove rigid separations among arts, sciences and vocational learning while preserving disciplinary depth. New interdisciplinary programmes can build confidence over time alongside established ones. Institutions are best placed to undertake this patient work.

Recent commentary on regional higher-education needs has rightly emphasised that admission patterns must be understood in their regional context. This local perspective can work within, rather than against, a national framework for academic mobility. Such data can reveal demand within a particular institution or region but they must be interpreted carefully.

A student's choice is also an exercise of agency. Career information should broaden that choice, not prescribe a single "correct" course based on short-term market trends. The All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2023-24 records 4.50 crore students, compared with 3.42 crore in 2014-15. Over the same period, the gross enrolment ratio for the 18-23 age group rose from 23.7 to 30.

Beyond course preferences, institutional reputation will continue to influence student decisions. Reputation may reflect teaching and research, but also history, location, alumni, programme range, and public visibility. A constructive approach is to widen the number of institutions that students and families can choose with confidence.

Student mobility

At the same time, local relevance should not confine a learner to the place of study. The National Credit Framework and the Academic Bank of Credits seek to make academic, vocational and experiential learning recognisable and portable across institutions and States. Institutions must ensure that credits are accurately recorded, transferred, and redeemed to enable students to complete their programmes promptly. When these arrangements work well, portability and place-based learning support student mobility.

A related question concerns the relationship between curriculum and employment. Degrees cannot be designed only around immediate job openings because economies and occupations change. Higher education must build knowledge, judgement, communication, creativity, and the capacity to learn and give students opportunities to apply those capabilities in professional, social, and community settings. NEP 2020's emphasis on multidisciplinary learning, internships, vocational exposure and local opportunity mapping brings these purposes together.

The UGC's guidance enables institutions to develop internship projects suited to their academic programmes and the surrounding economic environment. Its university-industry framework encourages regional clusters, Industry Relations Cells and engagement with micro, small, and medium enterprises. Apprenticeship-embedded degree programmes and Professors of Practice provide further channels for professional participation. AICTE's model curricula and applied-learning initiatives similarly connect technical education with projects, internships and emerging fields.

Accordingly, we should continue to build a stronger evidence base linking education to opportunity. From graduating students, institutes could collect information on employment, further study, entrepreneurship, location, wages, and the use of skills at suitable intervals after graduation, while respecting privacy issues. They should also present student-facing programme information, such as curriculum, costs, eligibility, accreditation, internships, completion, and possible pathways, in clear language, without making predictive promises. States and regional skills centres could bring together official labour data, apprenticeship information, industry evidence and institutional records.

Ultimately, India needs a connected education system in which qualifications are recognised across regions. Institutions should adapt to local needs, while students should be free to choose their learning pathways. We should continue to strengthen institutional capacity, measure outcomes reliably and use better regional data.

Views are personal

The writer is the Chairman of the Review Committee for NEP 2020 and Chairman, BoG, IIM-Calcutta.

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Indian hopes rest on Sindhu and Satwik-Chirag combine

The country has won at least one medal in the last 11 editions of the mega event; Ayush has his task cut out against Shi

WORLD C'SHIPS

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

The badminton World championships starting here on Monday will be as much a test of India's growth in the sport as a show of its organisational abilities both on and off the court.

The last time India hosted the marquee event in 2009, it had a grand total of one medal in the tournament's history. Since then, the country has not gone without one in the 11 editions starting 2011.

P.V. Sindhu, with five medals including the lone Indian gold under her belt, carries the hopes yet again. The ninth seed will begin her campaign against world No. 141 Sofia Nobel of Ireland. The road to the top will be anything but easy for the 31-year-old in her 10th Worlds. The 2019 gold was also her last medal in the competition. However, Sindhu has found form in recent times, clinching the Japan Open Super 750 crown last month.

Leaving no stone unturned: Chirag and Satwik would be keen to add to their medal tally. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

"I think winning the Japan Open gave me a lot of of confidence. Having five medals is an amazing journey... each gave me a different kind of experience. When I lost the 2017 World Championships (final to Japan's Nozomi Okuhara), I was very hard on myself. These moments made me stronger," Sindhu said on Sunday.

Defending champion Akane Yamaguchi of Japan will be looking to become the first women's singles player to win four golds, going past Spain's Carolina Marin.

Also hoping to put their recent injury woes behind and add to their collection would be Asian Games gold medallists Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty. The top Indian men's doubles pair has got a bye in the first round.

On Monday, Indian youngster Ayush Shetty takes on defending champion and top seed Shi Yuqi in the opening round. The 21-year-old is eyeing a first win in four meetings against the Chinese.

Lakshya Sen, attempting to become the first Indian man to win two medals, will begin against Collins Filimon of Austria on Tuesday. He is likely to run into former champion Thai Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the pre-quarterfinals.

India's Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh have been promoted to the mixed doubles main draw.

Indians in action (Monday):
Men: Singles: Ayush Shetty vs. Shi Yuqi (Chn).
Doubles: M.R. Arjun & Hariharan Amsakarunan vs. Scott Guildea & Paul Reynolds (Ire).
Women: Singles: P.V. Sindhu vs. Sofia Nobel (Ire).
Doubles: Treesa Jolly & Gayatri Gopichand vs. Paula Lopez & Lucia Rodriguez (Esp); Kavipriya Selvam & Simran Singhi vs. Nikol Carulla & Carmen Maria Jimenez (Esp).

Ever-hungry Sindhu targets record sixth Worlds medal

Devyanshi Bihani
NEW DELHI

Five-time World championships medallist P.V. Sindhu will look for a record-breaking sixth prize as she begins her campaign here on Monday. A half dozen medals will make her the first women's singles player to achieve the feat in the tournament.

Fresh from ending a long wait for a title at the Japan Open, Sindhu said the triumph had given her the confidence for the World championships. "It has been quite good, physically and mentally. I have been able to see the changes in terms of my game and my movement," she said.

One thing that has remained throughout her career, she said, is her "hunger towards the game".

"I know it is in me and I can still do it."

But the game has evolved, with women's singles becoming more demanding. "Women's singles used to be more attacking and fast-paced. Now it is more about long rallies, patience and staying on court for a longer period," she said.

Experience, she added, has helped her deal with conditions that can force players to alter their style.

"I'm much more experienced now in terms of how to deal with different conditions on court.

"Sometimes there is drift, and sometimes you cannot control the shuttle the way you want.

Sindhu. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

"You have to change accordingly and make things convenient for yourself."

The home setting brings added expectations, but the pressure that comes with playing a high-stakes match is nothing new to her.

"I have played a lot of first-round matches where I had butterflies and there is a lot of pressure... at the same time, there is nothing to lose. I just want to give my best because I have trained hard and I have worked hard in my training session".

SC Delhi turns the tables on Raengdai, meets East Bengal

DURAND CUP

Sports Bureau

Former champion East Bengal FC edged past Indian Army FT 1-0 in the second quarterfinal of the 135th Durand Cup at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata on Sunday.

The Kolkata outfit will face Sporting Club Delhi in the semifinal at the same venue on Wednesday. The latter had defeated FC Raengdai 5-1 in the first last-eight clash.

Vishnu strikes

P.V. Vishnu scored in the 39th minute, heading home a well-delivered cross from Christopher Ikonomidis to give East Bengal the lead.

The host dominated the first half and created several chances, but Army goalkeeper Bhabindra Malla Thakuri made a series of impressive saves.

East Bengal, which recently qualified for AFC Champions League Two, struggled to convert its opportunities after the break. However, its defence held firm.

At the Birsa Munda Stadium in Ranchi, SC Delhi produced a remarkable second-half comeback and netted five goals to turn the tables on debutant Raengdai.

Chongtham Kishan Singh gave the Noney-based Manipur side the lead with a spectacular long-range strike in the ninth minute.

Inspired change

After half-time, SC Delhi coach Tomasz Tchorz introduced India under-23 forward Joseph Sunny.

The move paid off as Sunny scored twice within 10 minutes to put Delhi 2-1 ahead by the 67th minute.

Rodriguinho, Juan Sebastian Pena and Augustine Lalrochana added a goal each as Delhi roared back in style.

The results (quarterfinals):
At Ranchi: Sporting Club Delhi 5 (Joseph Sunny 57, 67, Rodriguinho 82, Juan Sebastian Pena 90+3, Augustine Lalrochana 90+8) bt FC Raengdai 1 (Chongtham Kishan Singh 9)
At Kolkata: East Bengal FC 1 (P.V. Vishnu 39) bt Indian Army FT 0.
Monday's matches: At Kolkata: Mohun Bagan Super Giant vs. Jamshedpur FC (4 p.m.); **At Shillong:** Shillong Lajong FC vs. NorthEast United FC (7 p.m.).

APPOINTMENT

KLE Society's
KLE COLLEGE OF LAW
4th Floor, Plot No. 29, Sector-01, Kalamboli, Navi Mumbai, Panvel - 410 218.
MINORITY
Applications are invited for the following posts from the academic year 2026-2027
UN-AIDED
B.A. LLB (5yrs Course) & LLB (3yrs Course)

Sr. No.	CADRE	SUBJECT	Total No. of Posts	CATEGORY
1.	Principal	-	01	01 - OPEN
2.	Assistant Professor	Law	10	10 - OPEN
3.	Assistant Professor	English	01	01 - OPEN
4.	Assistant Professor	Economics	01	01 - OPEN
5.	Assistant Professor	History	01	01 - OPEN
6.	Assistant Professor	Political Science	01	01 - OPEN
7.	Assistant Professor	Sociology	01	01 - OPEN
8.	Librarian	-	01	01 - OPEN

- The above posts are open to all, however candidates from any category can apply for the post.
- Candidates having knowledge of Marathi will be preferred.
- **"Qualification, Pay Scales and other requirement are as prescribed by the UGC Notification dated 18th July, 2018, Government of Maharashtra Resolution No. Misc-2018/C.R.56/18/UNI-1, dated 8th March, 2019 and University circular No. TAAS/(CT)/ICD/2018-19/1241, dated 26th March, 2019 and revised from time to time" The Government Resolution & Circular are available on the website mu.ac.in**
- Applicants who are already employed must send their application through proper channel.
- Applicants are required to account for breaks, if any in their academic career.
- Application with full details should reach the **CHAIRMAN, K.L.E. Society's, KLE COLLEGE OF LAW, 4th Floor, Plot No. 29, Sector-01, Kalamboli, Nav Mumbai, Panvel - 410 218** within 15 days from the date of publication of this advertisement. **This is University approved advertisement.**

Sd-
Chairman

The Olympics is always the biggest stage

Robles has high hopes about Spain's future in table tennis, credits UTT for the evolution of the sport in India and shares the recipe for staying in the top 100 for more than a decade

BUTTERFLY UTT

INTERVIEW

Alvaro Robles

Amol Karhadkar

For more than a decade, Alvaro Robles has been a regular presence on the international table tennis circuit. The Spanish left-hander, who has reached a career-high No. 28 in the world, has spent nearly 10 years inside the top 100 and is now a familiar face in the Ultimate Table Tennis, having featured in six of the seven editions.

Robles' journey, however, began with an unlikely idol: Timo Boll. As a teenager in Spain, he watched videos of the German great and began copying his game before eventually moving to Germany to train alongside some of the world's best.

That decision, he says, shaped not only his table tennis but also his personality.

Now a father of two, Robles continues to juggle the demands of a professional career with family life while trying to earn another shot at the Olympics.

In an interaction with *The Hindu*, he spoke about Boll, his move to Germany, the evolution of Spanish table tennis, longevity in the sport, UTT's impact on Indian table tennis and his desire to feature in another Olympics. Excerpts:

You have spoken about Boll being one of your idols. How did that fascination begin?

I started watching him when I was 16 or 17. He was in his prime and I watched so many of his matches. I took a lot of motivation from his game. I think my style is quite similar to his.

Was there a particular moment that got you hooked to his style?

What I remember most is that when I was 16 or 17, we started getting access to computers and I watched the first videos on YouTube. I was very impressed. I started copying him in practice and tried to take every skill from him as a left-hander. As you said, it was natural for many lefties to copy Boll.

You then moved to Germany. Did you get an opportunity to interact with him?

Not very often, but a few times. I played against him and practised with him. It was a privilege to share those moments with somebody I really admired. I could never beat him – he was so good – but I managed to have some close matches. I was very happy about that.

How much did moving to Germany transform your career?

It had a huge impact on my career and table tennis. I got to know the best players in the world and learnt more about training systems, how other players think and what mentality is required to reach the top.

How difficult was it as a teenager to take that decision?

It was a difficult choice. When you decide to move, you don't know the consequences or what you will face. But it was a beautiful journey to discover. If I look back, I would do it again. I met people from all around the world... different countries and cultures. I am really happy to have experienced that kind of life.

Was it tough for your family to understand why you wanted to move to Germany?

In Spain, there was not much of a tradition for table tennis. My parents supported me, but I am not sure they knew exactly what kind of future I would have. I am grateful for their support and the freedom they gave me because that allowed me to develop my career, my personality and my character. I discovered so much about myself during that journey.

How much has Spanish table tennis changed over the last two decades?

It has developed a lot. I think we have been very successful in improving the medium level of players. Now we have around 20 players competing at a very similar level. They are not yet at the top level, but many are between 100 and 300 in the world and can compete really well.

The next step is obviously to have more players inside the top 100. But even at the base, we have some amazing under-13, under-15 and under-17 players achieving unbelievable international results.

If a Spanish teenager came to you today saying he wanted to make a career in table tennis, what would you tell him?

First, it is very important to understand the background of each player – where they come from, which club they belong to, how old they are and what they want to achieve. Everyone is individual and different. That is the first thing I would observe before giving any advice. I would like to know the background of each player so I can help them better.

You have spent almost a decade in the world's top 100. How demanding is that consistency?

It is very demanding. For 10 years I have been inside the top 100, and it costs a lot. In my case, the secret is consistency in the work. I thought about my practice, physical condition and performance every day. I was worried about improving every day and maybe that is why I have remained around the top 50. Now I am No. 67, but before the Olympics, I reached No. 28, which was great for my career. I keep thinking every day about how I can return to my best shape. I hope I can remain at this level for another 10 years.

Players are now extending their careers well into their late 30s and 40s. How has that become possible?

A few things have changed. There are now many opportunities to continue playing WTT events and league matches. There are great leagues where players can earn an income. To perform for many years, there is much more information about taking care of yourself – nutrition, physical preparation and psychology. Earlier, many players didn't have access to so much information.

Because of this, we feel better with our bodies, play with fewer injuries and continue believing that we can play at 38, 40 or 42. Then it comes down to your mental approach, motivation, circumstances, family and how long you want to keep travelling. Look at Robert Gardos, who is 47 and still performing extremely well. That is impressive, but it is also because he takes great care of himself.

How would you compare the support structure in Spain with countries such as Germany or Sweden, or India?

Support is not only about money. For me, support means having a structure of coaches and people who help develop the sport – physical trainers, analysts, physiotherapists and people guiding players towards their maximum potential.

Sometimes we are confused. Support is not simply 'I give you money and then you do what you want.' Support is creating a structure that helps a group reach its potential. That is what is improving now.

How difficult is it to balance travelling for seven months a year with family life?

It is difficult. I have travelled abroad for six or seven months a year, and it is hard when you know your family is at home. My children are young and they miss me.

We try to manage the logistics so they can come to some tournaments. My daughter came to the World Championships in Doha last year and they came to a Contender in Macedonia. That gives me energy because being away from home for so many weeks is difficult. Bringing them with me and having them around gives me motivation to keep trying for my best results.

How has fatherhood changed the approach to your career?

Totally. Even though I thought I would manage it one way, everything changed because the feelings are different. Suddenly, you have to face things you are not prepared for and manage them with your wife and family.

I think that it has been the biggest work I have had to do in recent years – more than table tennis: learning how to handle family life with professional life.

You have been part of UTT for six seasons. How have you seen the league evolve?

Quite well. The idea was to create a league where foreign players could bring experience to Indian table tennis. Now you see how much Indian table tennis has grown. It is crazy.

If you compare 2018 with 2026, you can now see how many Indian players are in the top 100, top 50 and top 40. Youngsters play as if they have 20 years of experience.

Earlier, you didn't see that. Now there are many of them.

That has come from the investment and effort of the federation and the people who wanted to create the league. It is very impressive.
You see youngsters such as Syndrela Das, who was watching from the stands when she was 11 or 12, now playing against players like Manika Batra and even beating them. That comes from a country's big effort to develop a sport.

What do you enjoy doing away from table tennis?

I love sport. I like playing tennis, padel and football. All my hobbies are related to sport. Going out with my wife when the kids are not with us is also something I enjoy – going on holiday after many months of hard work. That is how I switch off and recharge.

You have won a World championship doubles silver and a European mixed doubles gold. What remains the biggest target?

The European championship gold in mixed doubles is a great achievement because, at the end, it is a gold medal. It is very special to me. But the Olympics is always the biggest stage. Everything I am doing is aimed at getting that experience one more time. I know winning an Olympic medal is something really, really difficult... on another level.

But I try to find my best version and keep the opportunity open. You never know. I will keep fighting to be there and give my best version one more time.

Scientists find why an enervating disorder affects only Eurasians

The Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences in Hyderabad, diagnoses one case of Friedreich's ataxia every month on average — and almost all of these individuals come from consanguineous marriages, according to medical geneticist Ashwin Dalal

D.P. Kasbekar

Friedreich's ataxia, or FRDA, is a genetic disorder that progressively damages the nerves and the heart.

The affected individuals typically begin to show symptoms between the ages of 5 and 15. They become unsteady and their coordination is impaired. Their speech slows down and slurs. Swallowing becomes difficult. Hearing and vision deteriorates. They feel fatigued, lose sensation, first in the arms and legs, then in the trunk and other parts of the body, and the spine curves to one side. Eventually, most patients die relatively young, of heart disease. There is no cure.

According to Ashwin Dalal, a medical geneticist at the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences in Hyderabad, the institute diagnoses one case of FRDA every month on average – and almost all of these individuals come from consanguineous marriages. That is, marriages between relatives, such as uncles and nieces, or between cousins. Many Indian communities practise consanguinity – and it greatly increases the risk of genetic diseases that are otherwise rare. Friedreich's ataxia is one such disease.

Curiously, so far, FRDA has not been reported in people from sub-Saharan Africa, North America, and China, Japan, and Southeast Asia. For a long time, scientists have only found it in individuals of European, North African, West Asian, and South Asian descent.

A new study from researchers at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in the U.S. has finally cracked the puzzle. Their findings were reported in June 9 in the journal *Human Molecular Genetics*.

For a long time, scientists found FRDA in individuals of European, North African, West Asian, and South Asian descent. GETTY IMAGES (REPPRESENTATIVE IMAGE)

Inefficient powerhouses

FRDA is caused when a gene called *FXN* becomes mutated.

The *FXN* gene codes for a protein called frataxin. Frataxin is essential for mitochondria, which are our cells' powerhouses. The chemical ATP, which is the cell's energy currency, is made mostly in the mitochondria. Nerve, spinal cord, brain, and heart muscle cells use a lot of energy. When their frataxin levels become abnormally low, the mitochondria produce ATP less effectively and also accumulate toxic by-products. This renders the cell dysfunctional, leading to the symptoms of FRDA.

The most common disease-causing mutations occur in a part of the *FXN* gene called the intron. A mutation takes the form of modifying the number of times a particular sequence of bases is repeated in the intron. Normal variants of the *FXN* gene contain 5-11 or 12-33 repeats. They're called the short normal and long normal variants. The short-normal variant is common in Europe and South Asia (85-90% of the population), sub-Saharan Africa (90%), and East Asia (over 99%). The long-normal variants are absent in East Asia and make up most of the rest in sub-Saharan Africa and in Europe and South Asia.

However, the DNA sequences of people with Friedreich's ataxia revealed their *FXN* alleles variants had 100-1,500 repeats. The researchers called them expanded variants.

The short-normal and long-normal variants have an open structure in the chromosome that allows cells to make frataxin as needed. However, the expanded variants forced the chromosome to assume a closed shape that reduced frataxin expression.

Individuals who develop Friedreich's ataxia carry two copies of the expanded variant, one from each parent. A person with only one copy is called a carrier. Even though they themselves won't have the disease, carriers can pass their defective introns to their children.

Fortunately, genetic tests can find out if a person is a carrier and whether they passed their extended variant to their children.

From mutation to disease

The researchers also found that 95% of the expanded variants of the intron originally came from just two long-normal variants. Specifically, they reported that at two times in history, a long-normal variant mutated to an extended variant, both times in Eurasia. We don't know why these events happened nor why only long-normal variants mutated this way. We also don't know why this never happened in sub-Saharan Africa. On the other hand, the absence of long-normal variants in East Asian populations could explain why these problematic mutations didn't arise there.

These findings will help scientists understand what makes the two protomutations different from other long-normal variants; this answer in turn will help find ways to prevent or at least slow down the genetic changes

These originator mutations, which the researchers called protomutations, didn't straightaway lead to Friedreich's ataxia. Instead, they slowly but steadily changed into pre-mutations – where the number of repeats was abnormally high but not enough to significantly impair frataxin expression.

The non-disease-causing but still abnormal pre-mutations turned into an extended variant in a sudden burst of repeat expansion in a single or few parent-to-child transmissions.

Recall that people with Friedreich's ataxia die earlier. So over time, the extended variants disappear from the population. People with protomutations and pre-mutations on the other hand did not present that risk. As a result, they acted as 'reservoirs' in the population that steadily replenished the depleting extended variants over time.

Taken together, the patchy distribution of protomutations can explain why Friedreich's ataxia occurs only in some populations.

The protomutations arose only a few times and only in populations with a sufficient number of the long-normal variants.

Ancient DNA

Finally, by analysing DNA from the skeletal remains of individuals who lived in ancient times, the researchers also found both the two protomutations were present in Europe and Western Asia at least 9,000 years ago. However, they were not seen in the Neanderthals and Denisovans.

In a statement, research team leader Sanjay Bidichandani credited "the longstanding tradition in the human genetics community of freely sharing DNA sequence data" to be "crucial to accurately track the presence of susceptibility to Friedreich's ataxia from prehistoric humans to a wide variety of extant populations".

These findings will help scientists understand what makes the two protomutations different from other long-normal variants that don't turn into pre-mutations. This answer in turn will help find ways to prevent or at least slow down the genetic changes.

(D.P. Kasbekar is a retired scientist. kasbekardp@yahoo.co.in)

THE GIST

So far, Friedreich's ataxia has not been reported in people from sub-Saharan Africa, North America, and China, Japan, and Southeast Asia

A new study from researchers at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center found that Friedreich's ataxia is caused when a gene called *FXN* becomes mutated

The study found that patchy distribution of originator mutations, called protomutations, can explain why Friedreich's ataxia occurs only in some populations

BIG SHOT

Adult and immature blue-footed boobies rest on rocks near the entrance to the Panama Canal as seabirds native to the cold, nutrient-rich waters off Peru and Chile appear outside their usual range, while El Niño warms the eastern Pacific and disrupts marine food supplies, off the coast of Panama City on August 5. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

Hara mangrove forests

Vasudevan Mukunth

The Hara forests are a vital ecological treasure of the Persian Gulf. Spanning the Strait of Hormuz, these mangrove forests consist mainly of grey mangrove trees (*Avicennia marina*), which have a special filtration system in their roots that allows them to thrive in saline conditions. The same roots also protect the coast against erosion and are voluminous carbon sinks, sequestering significantly more carbon than terrestrial forests.

The forests are a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and serve as an important nursery for marine life as they shelter shrimp, crabs, and numerous fish species that sustain the region's fisheries. Up from the water's edge, the Hara forests' canopy is also a major migratory hub for birds like the great stone-curlew and various herons. The mangroves are the backbone of the sustainable tourism programmes of Qeshm, an Iranian island in the Persian Gulf, and draw visitors to their labyrinthine waterways.

Protecting these forests is crucial for the lives and livelihoods of Qeshm's local communities and for efforts to preserve the Gulf's natural heritage.

Environmentalists have said losing them would trigger a catastrophic collapse of the local food chain and coastal defenses.

A satellite image shows Qeshm Island following an oil spill at sea, off the coast of Iran, on August 10, 2026. REUTERS

Recent satellite images have revealed a major environmental threat to just these forests: an oil spill off Qeshm's southern coast. Experts have identified the source to be a bulk carrier named Minoan Pioneer, which has been leaking heavy fuel oil after being struck by a projectile. The slick stretches 160 km long, with dark liquid already washing ashore. The ongoing West Asia conflict is also hindering cleanup efforts, leaving the mangroves at great risk of devastation.

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Area affected by Belgium wildfire since Friday

3,000 in hectares. A wildfire raging in a nature reserve in eastern Belgium, the biggest to hit the country in recent history, has more than doubled in size in 24 hours to affect some 3,000 hectares, authorities said on Sunday. The Wallonia regional government said that over 250 emergency personnel were mobilised. AFP

Persons killed in Israeli strikes in southern Lebanon

11 Israel vowed on Sunday it would hit Hezbollah again if threatened, as it identified what it described as a commander killed in strikes a day earlier that also left several children dead. Israeli strikes on Saturday killed 11 people in southern Lebanon, according to authorities, in the deadliest attacks since a deal was reached in June aimed at ending hostilities. AFP

Roads blocked in Himachal Pradesh due to torrential rains

118 Torrential rains in Himachal Pradesh have led to the closure of 118 roads across the State, as the local meteorological office issued an orange alert for heavy to very heavy rains at isolated places in five districts on Monday and Tuesday. Dharamshala recorded 96.2 mm of rainfall, followed by Palampur at 55 mm and Kangra at 34.6 mm. PTI

Students stranded as floodwaters enter school in Odisha

400 Around 400 students, including 150 girls, were left stranded at a government-run residential school in Odisha's Kendrapara district after floodwater entered the campus on Sunday, an official said. The school is located in a low-lying area at Kulasahi village under Penthapala gram panchayat in Pattamundai block. PTI

Aid trucks that entered Afghanistan via Pakistan

700 More than 700 trucks carrying international humanitarian aid arrived in Afghanistan via Pakistan despite a near-total closure of the land border between the two countries in October, the United Nations said Sunday. The convoy was carrying "food and other humanitarian items," a UN spokesperson said. AFP

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The federal dilemma of delimitation

The Centre made an oral assurance while introducing the Bill to increase Lok Sabha seats that each State's share would increase by 50% on a pro-rata basis. However, the increase could weaken the Rajya Sabha's role as a check on the Lower House, while the Lok Sabha's limited sitting days would leave MPs with less time to raise issues

EXPLAINER

Rangarajan R.

The story so far:

The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly has passed a resolution urging the Centre to permanently freeze the number of Lok Sabha seats at the existing number of 543 and maintain the present State-wise distribution of those seats. It also advocated the preservation of current ratio of 2.2:1 between Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha seats. It sought the implementation of one-third reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha from the 2029 election onwards, without linking it to any future census or delimitation.

Defining delimitation

Delimitation means the process of fixing the number of seats and boundaries of the territorial constituencies in each State for the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. This 'Delimitation process' is performed by 'Delimitation Commission' that is set up under an act of Parliament. The last time when the number of seats were determined was on the basis of 1971 census population.

'Democracy' means 'rule or government by the people'. It follows that the government is elected by a majority with the broad principle of 'one citizen-one vote-one value'. Article 81(2) of the Constitution provides that the ratio between the number of seats and population of a State, shall as far as practicable be same for all the States. The number of seats in the Lok Sabha based on 1971 census was fixed at 543, when the population was 54.8 crores. This broadly translated to an average population of 10.1 lakhs per constituency. However, it has been frozen as per 1971 census in order to encourage population control measures so that States with higher population growth do not end up having higher number of seats. This was done through the 42nd Amendment Act till the year 2000 and was extended by the 84th amendment act till 2026. This number will have to be readjusted based on the first census after 2026 which would be the next census in 2027. In 2023, through the 106th Constitutional Amendment, the Parliament had provided for one-third reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. This would be through delimitation based on the census in 2027.

The issues involved

The population explosion that happened in our country during the last five decades has been uneven, with some States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan witnessing a greater increase than States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The ratio between the current number of seats and the projected population of States as of 2026 does not satisfy the core democratic principle of 'one person-one vote-one value' **(Table 1)**. On the other hand, the increase in the number of seats among various States based on the current population (to 848) is provided in **Table 2**. Southern States, smaller states in the North, as well as the North Eastern States, are bound to be at a disadvantage when compared to large north Indian States in such a scenario. This would be against the federal principles of our country. It also goes against the philosophy for freezing the seats as per 1971 census with the States that have been better at controlling the population losing out on their political significance.

Representation imbalance

The redistribution of seats based on current population could put smaller and less populous States at a disadvantage

Table 1: Value of vote of each citizen based on estimated population as of 2026

State	Number of seats at present	Projected population as of 2026 (in crore)	Projected population per Lok Sabha seat (in lakh)	Value of 1 vote*
Uttar Pradesh	80	25.7	32.1	0.56
Bihar	40	13.5	33.8	0.53
Rajasthan	25	8.4	33.6	0.54
Madhya Pradesh	29	9.1	31.4	0.57
Tamil Nadu	39	7.8	20	0.9
Andhra Pradesh + Telangana	42	9.3	22.1	0.81
Kerala	20	3.6	18	1
Karnataka	28	6.9	24.6	0.73
Punjab	13	3.2	24.6	0.73
Himachal Pradesh	4	0.8	20	0.9
Uttarakhand	5	1.2	24	0.75

* Kerala calculated as 1 and States' values derived on this base

Table 2: If the number of seats is increased to 848 based on 2026 projected population

(Based on research paper of Milan Vaishnav and Jamie Hintson, for the Carnegie endowment)

State	Number of seats at present	Projected number of seats	Existing proportion	Revised proportion
Uttar Pradesh	80	143	14.7%	16.9%
Bihar	40	79	7.4%	9.3%
Rajasthan	25	50	4.6%	5.9%
Madhya Pradesh	29	52	5.3%	6.1%
Tamil Nadu	39	49	7.2%	5.8%
Andhra Pradesh + Telangana	42	54	7.7%	6.4%
Kerala	20	20	3.7%	2.4%
Karnataka	28	41	5.2%	4.8%
Punjab	13	18	2.4%	2.1%
Himachal Pradesh	4	4	0.7%	0.5%
Uttarakhand	5	7	0.9%	0.8%
Total	543	848		

Current proposal by the Centre

The Union government had introduced the Constitution 131st Amendment Bill in April 2026 to increase the maximum number of Lok Sabha seats from existing 550 to 850. The Home Minister made an oral assurance in the Parliament that the number of seats in each State/Union Territory would be increased by 50% on a pro-rata basis. However, this bill was defeated in the Lok Sabha. There are expectations that the government may introduce the bill again, in the near future with explicit provisions for 50% increase in seats for all States/Union Territories on a pro-rata basis.

The larger implications

The are two main arguments in support of the proposal for 50% pro-rata increase. First, it would not alter the current proportion of representation of various States/Union Territories in the Lok Sabha. Second, it would enable seamless reservation of one-third seats for women with the additional 272 seats being reserved for women out of the enlarged house of around 816 seats.

However, such an increase has its share of challenges. Firstly, the current strength of Rajya Sabha is 245 that results in a ratio of 2.2:1 between the total strength of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. An increase in Lok Sabha seats by 50% without altering seats in Rajya Sabha would skew this ratio to 3.3:1.

In the event of disagreement between the two houses on any bill, there is a mechanism for Joint Sitting under the Constitution to resolve the deadlock. Though used rarely in the past (only 3 times since Independence), this increased strength in the Lok Sabha runs the risk of rise in such joint sittings to push through Bills. In such a scenario, it would diminish the role of the Rajya Sabha as an effective check and balance on the Lok Sabha. Secondly, considering that the Lok Sabha sits for only around 60 days in a year, there would hardly be any meaningful time for each MP to raise their issues in the house. The purpose of the house would then be reduced to mere numerical representation rather than meaningful deliberation.

Finally, the increased cost to the exchequer because of additional MPs including allocation for the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) funds needs to be borne in mind.

Harmonious reconcilliation

The issue arises as the democratic and federal principles seem to be at loggerheads in the delimitation exercise as currently envisaged. However, they can be harmoniously reconciled by giving equal importance to both. The main work of a Member of Parliament is to legislate on the 'Union List' subjects such as defence, external affairs, railways, telecommunication, taxation etc. and hold the Central government accountable. A majority of the schemes of the Central Government are implemented only by the State governments. Hence, the number of MPs in Lok Sabha may be frozen at the present number of 543, which would ensure no disruption to the current representation of various States. This would maintain and uphold the federal principle. One-third reservation for women can be provided out of the existing 543 seats. The number of MLAs in each State may be increased in line with the current population to address the democratic representational requirement.

(Rangarajan R. is a former IAS officer and author of 'Courseware on Polity Simplified'. He currently trains at 'Officers IAS Academy'. Views expressed are personal.)

THE GIST

- The Union government introduced the Constitution 131st Amendment Bill in April 2026 to increase the maximum number of Lok Sabha seats from the existing 550 to 850.
- The Tamil Nadu Assembly recently passed a resolution urging the Centre to permanently freeze the number of Lok Sabha seats at 543 and maintain the present State-wise distribution of seats.
- The ratio between the current number of seats and the projected population of States as of 2026 does not satisfy the principle of 'one person, one vote, one value'. However, increasing the number of seats based on current population would put smaller and less populous States at a disadvantage.

CACHE

Digital trail: How exactly the watermarking technology works for Claude text is not yet clear, but users have expressed concerns. REUTERS

Understanding Anthropic's move to watermark Claude AI content

While many regulators want AI content to be more clearly labelled, Claude users worry about their written work being flagged as AI; although watermarks provide a reliable way to verify the origin of images and videos, accurately detecting AI-generated text is uncharted territory.

Sahana Venugopal

The story so far:

As part of its measures to comply with the European Union's AI Act, the Google and Amazon-backed Anthropic announced that Claude content in the future will carry a machine-readable marking to better enable AI content labelling.

Adding a watermark to AI images and videos is not a new concept. However, the update that made waves was Anthropic announcing that it would add a watermark to Claude text as well, potentially forcing millions to reconsider their use of AI tools. This update will be globally implemented.

What is the new watermarking system by Anthropic?

The new policy was introduced after Anthropic signed the EU AI Act's Article 50(2) Code of Practice on Transparency of AI-Generated Content.

In order to better identify content that Claude has generated and/or processed, Anthropic is set to add watermarks embedded in text content, as well as signed provenance metadata attached to supported files in formats such as .svg, .png, or .jpg.

Regarding the text-based watermark applied at the model level, users will not be able to see it and Anthropic has confirmed that it will not affect Claude's response.

However, one statement in particular caught the attention of AI users: "Because the watermark is part of the text, it will travel with the text when it's copied and pasted elsewhere, and may persist through some editing."

In essence, this update forces millions of Claude customers to entirely reconsider their use of AI tools. Professional emails, personal messages, school assignments, workplace deliverables, and other types of written content that could once be passed off easily as human-made, may soon come with an AI watermark – even if Claude's involvement was close to negligible.

How exactly the watermarking technology works in the case of Claude text is not yet clear, as the rollout announcement did not reveal the full technical details.

Furthermore, Anthropic is still working on letting external parties detect the Claude AI markings. More information is expected in the future.

Output from the Claude Platform (API), Claude, Claude Code, Claude Cowork, and Claude Tag are set to get the embedded watermarks. The same applies when Claude models are accessed through AWS, Google Cloud, and Microsoft Foundry.

Why are Claude users and non-users concerned?

While some praised Anthropic's marking policy in the hopes of seeing more clearly labelled AI-generated content, critics argued that Claude adding a watermark even to lightly edited text could put reputations at serious risk.

For example, if a human-made file is proofread, translated, summarised, or even converted by someone else using Claude, the final output could still carry a mark, according to Anthropic's update. Naturally, this has put both AI users as well as non-users on edge.

Anthropic also warned about the possibility of false positive and false negative results: detecting a Claude mark does not confirm that the work was created by AI, while the lack of a mark does not mean the work was 100% human-made.

Some factors that can throw off results include short text lengths, content changes after Claude processing, metadata being stripped by converting the file format, and the use of a Claude offering that does not yet support AI marking.

In the days following Anthropic's announcement, multiple dubious websites claiming to offer Claude AI watermark "removal" or "clean up" services have come online.

These concerns are not new. The earlier rise of a market for AI text detectors – and subsequently, AI text humanisers designed to deceive these same detectors – has resulted in multiple authors and bloggers being accused of passing off AI content as original creations.

Despite AI text detection tools being experimental, fallible, and prone to errors, they have been involved in cases that led to cancelled book deals and social media trolling.

Claude users now fear that their own AI tool could end up damaging their credentials.

Are watermarks effective at stopping fake AI content?

Watermarks certainly help simplify the jobs of regulators, fact-checkers, and journalists by giving them a reliable way to verify the origin of an image or a video and even trace it back to a specific provider. But accurately detecting AI-generated text is uncharted territory.

What's more, AI-generated content often travels far and can be circulated thousands of times on social media unchecked, as content moderation rules have been loosened across Mark Zuckerberg's Meta family of apps and Elon Musk's X.

The average internet user distractedly scrolling through media on their phone often misses even visible AI watermarks, let alone invisible markings.

Tech providers and regulators will need to work hand-in-hand to make sure that the AI watermarks lead to a tangible reduction in misinformation, deepfakes, or AI content being passed off as human-made.

For now, however, Claude users are rethinking their workflows and debating at what point human content turns into AI content. Anthropic's watermarking initiative for AI text is an intriguing concept, but it is too soon to tell if this approach to labelling will lead to more clarity or create more confusion.

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

The college's science lab is antiquated

The Principal received a shoal of petitions to replace the equipment

S. Upendran

What is the difference between 'old fashioned' and 'antiquated'? (Anil Surana, Jaipur)

One of the meanings the two words have in common is 'not modern', 'outdated'. Unlike 'old fashioned', 'antiquated' carries with it a very negative meaning. When you say that a gadget is antiquated, it suggests that the gadget in question is so outdated, that in today's world, it serves no purpose. It has been replaced by something much more efficient. You are being critical of it. For example, today the old audio compact cassette tapes and floppy discs would be considered antiquated - nobody uses them anymore. They are no longer fit for the purpose for which they were originally designed.

The Government hospital is planning to replace the antiquated X-ray machines.

We need to change some of our antiquated laws.

When you refer to something as being 'old fashioned', it does not always have a negative connotation. For example, when one talks about 'old fashioned values', it suggests they are something which you are nostalgic about; something which you truly value. Unlike 'antiquated', 'old fashioned' suggests that something is charming. Something that is antiquated, usually needs to be replaced; old fashioned dresses can still be worn today. They may look dated, but are functional.

Whenever Hema visits her grandmother, she jots down some old-fashioned recipes.

These old-fashioned houses are so cool during the summer.

What is the meaning of automania? (Banu Varma, Kochi)

The term has two very different meanings. In everyday contexts, we often shorten the word automobile to 'auto'. When used in this manner, 'automania' refers to someone who is crazy or excessively enthusiastic about cars and driving fast.

As a teenager, Karthik had a severe case of automania.

The word 'auto' has another meaning as well; it can be used to refer to oneself. A person who has 'automania' is obsessed about himself; he is an egomaniac. He believes he is the most important person wherever he goes. He is very self-centred.

What is the meaning of 'shoal of fish'? How is the word 'shoal' pronounced? (Kavitha Kumar, Vellore)

The 'sh' is like the 'sh' in 'ship', 'sheep' and 'shy', while the following 'oa' sounds like the 'o' in 'go' 'so' and 'no'. The word rhymes with 'pole', 'hole' and 'mole'. According to scholars, 'shoal' comes from the Old English 'scolu' meaning 'crowd of fish'. Today, a large group of fish swimming together is frequently referred to as a 'shoal of fish' or a 'school of fish'.

We saw several shoals of fish when we went snorkelling.

'Shoal' can also be used with people. One can describe a large group of people as a 'shoal of people'. We can use the word with things as well.

A shoal of the star's fans made their way into the court.

Word of the day

Decadence:
the state of being degenerate in mental or moral qualities

Synonym: degeneration

Usage: *The leader's decadence became evident in his abuse of power.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/decadence

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈdɛkədəns/

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on Indonesia, as the Asian country observes its Independence Day today

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Indonesia is the largest of this type of political entity, with over 17,000 islands between the Indian and Pacific oceans under its control. What type of state?

QUESTION 2
Name the first president of Indonesia from 1945 to 1967 and his daughter who also held the office between 2001 and 2004.

QUESTION 3
Name the invisible biogeographical boundary — running between Bali and Lombok, and between Borneo and Sulawesi — that separates Asian and Australian wildlife zones within Indonesia.

QUESTION 4
Name the Indonesian textile art using wax, that was given a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage status in 2009, and made famous by the type of shirts that Nelson Mandela sported frequently.

QUESTION 5
What is Indonesia's National emblem, which gets its name from a bird from Indian mythology and the 5 principles of the country's national ideology.

QUESTION 6
Indonesia is relocating its capital away from Jakarta to a purpose-built city in Borneo. What is it called?

QUESTION 7
Indonesia is home to the world's largest Buddhist temple, built in the 9th-century in Central Java, with nine stacked platforms and thousands of relief panels. Name this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

QUESTION 8
Name the real-life couple who gave Indonesia its first-ever Olympic gold medals in 1992 and in which sport?

Visual question: Name this creature, considered the largest extant lizard, which gets its name from an Indonesian island to which it is endemic. AFP

Questions and answers to the previous daily quiz: 1. Name of the organisation that Fidel and his comrades started to commemorate the failed attacks on the Moncada barracks. **Ans: 26th July Movement**
2. Name of the speech (the English translation) that Fidel gave in the trial following the Moncada barracks attack. **Ans: History will absolve me**
3. The boat that carried Fidel and 81 of his companeros from Tuxpan in Mexico to Playa Las Coloradas. **Ans: Granma**
4. The record for the longest speech in the UN belongs to an Indian diplomat/minister. Name him. **Ans: V.K. Krishna Menon**
5. Name of the brigade of medical professionals, established by Fidel, that was deployed across the world during health crises. The claim to fame of the person after whom the brigade was named. **Ans: Henri Reeve Brigade, named after a New York born American who participated in the Cuban war of independence from Spain**
Visual: The three comrades of Fidel - second from left (standing), fourth from left (sitting). **Ans: Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Raul Castro and Juan Almeida**
Early birds: Siddhartha Viswanathan| Prem Nath Tiwari| Sumana Dutta| Nairah Hussain| Lalchand Bhutani

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